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OF LIFE

FRANCIS STOPPORD



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**THE . . .
TOIL OF LIFE**

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THE TOIL OF LIFE

BEING A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS
ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF
JOY AND PAIN.

BY
FRANCIS STOPFORD.

"I state nothing new; I re-write old formulas; I strive to re-echo eternal verities. The shadows lengthen, and I cannot find it in my heart to own that my little day has been of no account."—
Chap. X., Sec. xxxvii.

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1907.

W. S. C.



DEDICATION.

THE writer dedicates these essays to earth's toilers, in the hope they may find in them words of comfort and of strength. They who dawdle along the graded roads of life are not likely to discover anything attractive here.

This volume is, as it were, a bunch of wild-flowers picked beside the dusty highway, at the edge of the morass, among the thorns and on the steep of the hills. The writer knows that many of these flowers have been brought to higher perfection in sheltered gardens; but his ambition has been that whosoever may read will see, as he has seen, that flowers blow even where the road is dreariest.

Life is harsh and unlovely for many, but

he hopes that this, his bunch of wild-flowers, may help to remind even them that there is still joy and beauty to be found, though the thorns be set thickly about the path and the toil of life be heavy and long and weary.

THE TOIL OF LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

THERE is a range of hills in India
I. lying parallel to the western seaboard;
at a distance varying from ten to
forty miles, known as the Western Ghats.
Heavily watered, they are heavily wooded.
Below the ghats is a stretch of fertile littoral;
above them hilly country, which during the
last sixty years (at the point of which I am
writing) has been reclaimed from jungle by
European enterprise and capital. Here tea,
coffee, pepper and other sub-tropical products
are cultivated. When a man travels from the
coast to these planting districts, he speaks
of going up the ghat. The word (pronounced

gort) signifies a pass—a steep pass, a mountain pass.

At rare intervals graded and metalled high roads have been constructed, but even they are steep, and the climb is long and weary. Where the road zigzags there are short cuts from one loop to another, which save something in the matter of distance; but a man must be in good training and have the instinct of locality to derive advantage from them, for the toil and sweat are tremendous and it is easy to lose the way among the undergrowth.

The ghats, viewed from the coast of a morning, as the sun rises over the peaks, lie low on the horizon. They might almost be a huge grassy bank, so easy do their slopes appear. As you approach them it is difficult to realize the arduous climb. I have often walked up the ghat. I have travelled the twenty miles of coast country by night in a bullock-cart in which a mattress had been placed. If you be young and healthy, you



sleep like a top in this strange travelling bed.
Before dawn the foot of the ghat is reached.

The air is chilly for the sun has not yet warmed the day. Trees curtain the scarp, and the noise of the waterfalls is music in your ears. Glorious woodland towers above you, and you think it were easy to force a path straight upwards to the heights. Rocks jut out from this cataract of forest, and in the deceptive half-light of the dawn it seems almost possible to leap from one rock to another and so win the summit.

With buoyant step you begin the walk, glad to stretch your limbs. The first few miles are quickly traversed, but the road seems so tame that if a flower beckons from a swamp you must needs break through the thorns to pick it. By the side of the road runs a little stream, a dull runlet; but where the bridge spans the mountain torrent you pause, lost in delight at the sparkling roar of the rushing waters. Presently the sun that

you reproached for its tardiness displays its power, and the difficulty of the hill proclaims itself.

The struggle now begins in earnest, but you laugh in your heart at the thought that you could be beaten. The fight only serves to stiffen your muscles; there is joy in it. Soon the winding road becomes monotonous. Its beauty is always the same, so that it ceases to have beauty. At each turn you imagine a new vista must present itself; but no! it is the same one once again. A white ribbon hundreds of feet higher streaks the mountain-side: it is your road five miles ahead. Here is a by-path through the forest that must surely rise directly to it and save many a monotonous mile. You take it. In the beginning it leads straight upwards, but then drops through a fold in the hills. Now it separates, and the question arises, Which is the right path? This one you take.

The mountain torrent divides it, and the

waters, which an hour or two previously had caused you infinite delight, have become a serious obstacle in the upward way. The river is forded with difficulty, only for you to find a great rock barring the path. So you are forced downwards, and at last strike again the high road, not five miles ahead, but a couple of miles below where you left it. A good hour has been wasted. But your way is upward and you toil on, taking the lesson to heart. The heat of the sun is overpowering and every limb aches; but though weary, you never think of giving in. The dull runlet by the roadside now appears a godsend. Kneeling down, you drink thirstily from it, and thankfully bathe your heated head in its cold stream.

Before the summit is reached, the view compels a rest. You look away to the sea on the far horizon, where the sky bends down and meets it, quiet heaven kissing unrestful ocean. Mountains rise about you: precipices

of black rock, on which moisture glistens like tears of gladness in the eyes of sorrow; at their base forest trees grow strongly in the rich mould. Further down are swamps, where only screw pine and briars flourish, and which are rank with poisonous miasmas. Nevertheless they bear in their bosom the springs whence issue the streams that water the plains where rice and millet are growing. But for those swamps the farmers' fields would be barren in many seasons; but for the hard rock slowly crumbling away, no rich soil would exist for forest or harvest. The scene is one of apparently reckless disorder, but gradually you perceive that each condition ministers to the other.

I have never walked up the ghat without thinking that it is a living parable of life. I have never looked on this view without in all reverence wondering whether, if man were permitted to stand beside the Throne of God, he would not see that the strange inequalities



of life are a part of a well-ordered scheme which in fulness of time shall bear fruit a hundredfold for man. Pain, pleasure, suffering, joy, which seem to us who dwell in the valleys and on the hill-sides to be so unfairly and recklessly distributed, may each serve their purpose in the plan of Him who both made the earth and saw that it was good, and also created man in His own image and blessed him.

At this spot on the ghat I stood once as the clouds gathered. Mists hid the way I had come; mists enveloped the spot where I stood; mists veiled the path I had still to go. Is not this life? Out of the mist, through the mist, into the mist. And wherefore?

Whence came I? Who am I? Whither go I? The bone and body of me I understand; but my sentient being, the brain, the thought, the prayer, my living soul—whence are they? Who gave them to me. Was it man? Was it God?

I gained a fuller understanding of
II. life on a coast by a tropical sea.

There I watched the morning sun
burnish the crystal calm of a silent ocean;
I witnessed the storm ride out of the west
and spurn into foam a black waste of turbulent waters; I beheld breakers curl into
lambent flame of sapphire, ruby and opal on
steamy nights during the hottest heat of the
year; and I saw the waves rend themselves
above the reef, rising high in air and falling
back as impotent as tears fall beside a death-
bed, when the tempest roared and the rain
storm blotted out the horizon. That very
wind, that very rain was carrying fertility over
the plains of India. Huge waves rolled land-
ward and broke with the crash of thunder into
a seething of sand-soiled surf. Not a boat could
live in that sea; but on land the husbandman
was happy, urging on his yoke of oxen that
drew a primitive plough such as Tubal Cain
might have forged. How often it happens,




though we may fail to perceive it, that sorrow in this house means joy in that home. It is almost as if Nature holds a true balance between grief and happiness, taking from one scale to add to the other.

In childhood life is as calm as a tropical sea at sunrise. It is even so with each day when affairs move normally. As the hours wear on little troubles occur, the winds arise; annoyances happen, the waves are troubled. Then comes night: we sleep, and wake with the troubles and annoyances of yesterday smoothed away. Man is apt to forget that the blessings of the night are not his heritage alone, but are shared with the beasts of the field, with the flowers by the wayside, with the waves and with the winds. When the black curtain falls all are lulled. Mother Earth, as she turns herself from the fiery sphere, draws her children close to her breast, whether they possess immortal souls or are as bodiless and as soulless as the wandering airs and fluent waves.

She hushes all to rest that strength may be renewed on the morrow.

Sunrise is beautiful and awakes good thoughts, but sunset has the deeper inspiration. I have often watched from a headland the day die. The vast plain of grey waters, at dawn a sea of glass like unto crystal, in the afternoon was broken and disturbed. The waves flung themselves petulantly upon the beach, they clambered noisily among the rocks, and wrestled out at sea with every gust of wind. But as the sun descended, he smote across the greyness a lane of dazzling silver. Lower he sank—the Lord of Day, the King of Colour-land. Down the mountain, from the grove, past the sail, out of the high vault of heaven, his subjects trooped, the people of Colour-land. Close beside his palace gates, warriors and priests were gathered—the crimsons and the ruddy golds. Outside that throng flocked the women—those gentle hues of blue and grey and violet; and with them were the




children—tints of ruddy pink. High in the eastern sky was a white cloud flecked with gold. It might have been a young mother with her first-born on her bosom, standing aloof even from the women lest their grief should dim the brightness of her darling's joy.

Eastward were the distant mountains. At that sunset hour they would stand so near that it seemed possible to count each individual tree of all their multitudinous verdure. They were sad, but their sadness breathed comfort; they were calm, and in their calmness there was strength. On the face of the everlasting hills I beheld the sorrowful serene of immortality.

✓ The sun passed below the horizon. The colours dispersed rapidly—the deeper shades first, just as men separate quickly from a scene of sorrow. The gentler tints remained longer in the sky, as if in truth they were moved by the heart of womanhood. Another day was dead: another day's life was ended. There is always an atmosphere of sadness at sunset, but some-

times it is so serene that it is rather sympathy than sadness. Sympathy with sorrow bears the precious seed of happiness, and he who sows it weeping comes again with rejoicing bringing his sheaves with him.



Sunset among the hills tells a different parable, for when the sun has set there follows an aftermath. The peaks are crowned with golden light though darkness is heavy in the valleys. The river flows full and wide across the level places; but ascend the hills, and not until you stand at the edge of the gorge, do you realize a stream divides you from what lies beyond. It is so in life. On the valley where the flowers bloom and crops are plenteous and the road is comparatively easy, the shadow of death falls. From afar the mortal sees the glimmer of the dread river, and the chill of its mists strikes to the bone long before the bank is reached. But let him bravely struggle up the bare hills of sorrow, pain and toil, he never thinks of the river until he stands above



it; and then the roar of its waters is a murmur in his ears, inviting rest. No shadow lies upon the hill-tops, even at nightfall. The sun passes below the horizon, but the golden light of the afterglow clings to the height, so that they, who may have watched from afar, shall hardly tell when that man's sun set or when his day was really ended.

Golden Goa is a dead Christian city
III. rotting under a jungle shroud at the
foot of the Western Ghats. Above
the ghats its old Mahommedan rival, Bijapur,
crumbles into ruins. Were it not for their
dead, Goa and Bijapur would be to-day only
memories.

Goa at the height of its magnificence had a population of two hundred thousand. Money was poured out lavishly on palace, college and church. Many of these grand structures remain, clustered about the great square, now desolate and grass-grown. The buildings



are empty and in decay. Not a hundred souls dwell to-day in Goa.

The ancient capital of Portugal's Indian Empire lies a few miles from the coast, and the usual approach is by the tidal river up which the ships of Albuquerque sailed. But I drove to it across the island in the early morning. Presently, in the distance uprose the west front of a stately church upon a mount. It dominated the landscape, reminding me of Lincoln Cathedral. Mile after mile was traversed, but there was no escape from that church. A church I called it until the carriage passed beneath the hill; and lo! behind that buttressed façade were only broken stones, creeper-hidden. It epitomized the tragedy of Golden Goa. Goa is the skeleton of earthly pomp that has crumbled into dust.

I wandered all the morning from empty palace to silent church, through cloisters where for centuries the footstep of monk had

never fallen, along the corridors of colleges whose last students had long ago dissolved into parent dust. Time had flung open for me the gateways of the convents. Nature hides the abomination of desolation, for though death grins from every corner, a comely pall of verdure has been cast everywhere to conceal his hideous devastation.

The cathedral is in good repair, and across the desolate square stands the noble Church of Bom Jesus, where repose the bones of St. Francis Xavier. His shrine has saved Goa from forgetfulness. Pilgrimages are still made to it by thousands of devout Roman Catholics from all quarters of the Orient. The shrine is in a transept near the east end; the body of the saint—who died in 1552—was only placed there in 1655. The reredos of this church is a mighty figure of Loyola, the founder of the Order of the Jesuits, Francis Xavier being one of the seven original members. The nave is empty, there



are no seats, but every stone of the pavement bears an inscription showing that it seals the grave of some noble or priest of old Portugal. At the west end is a high gallery, wherein stands a life-size Crucifix.

I had seen the church in the morning as a tourist, but I was compelled to stay in Goa until the evening, for I was there to describe the visit of a Man of Some Importance. The early afternoon was hot; and it was necessary to rest out of the sun. I entered the Church of Bom Jesus seeking a cool spot where to pass away the time; but there was only the bare pavement, so I tried the gallery and at last found a resting-place on the wooden pedestal of the Crucifix. Here at the feet of the Crucified One, in that deserted church, crowded with its dead, I slept soundly for two hours. No vision came to me; I heard no voices in my dreams. He at whose feet I lay did not descend from his Throne of Torment to kiss

me on the brow. I awoke at the sound of the tolling of a bell. It was the big bell of the cathedral across the square, the very metal that three centuries before had called good Christian men to that place to rejoice in the spectacle of infidels tortured down to hell. But I knew all it meant that day was that the Man of Some Importance had reached the broken landing-stage. I made haste to get away—I the only living being in that church. No, that is not true! There were four of us who live here on earth—the Christ upon the Cross, Loyola, Francis Xavier and myself. Christ is immortal; his two devoted servants live in the spirit and have still good work to do. I, who alone am in the flesh, stand nearest death. I go down into the grave and my work is over. I die; they live on.

Less than a week later I was at Bijapur. It is a city of ruins, but not quite so silent or deserted as Goa. Its special interest lies in the

mausoleums of its sultans, monarchs who were the terror of Goa in the days of her prosperity. On the day of his accession each sultan laid the foundation stone of his tomb. If he died before the work was finished, it remained unfinished; none carried it on. There are still uncompleted tombs in Bijapur begun centuries ago. These sultans lived in an atmosphere of battle, murder and sudden death. They did not fear death but oblivion; they trembled lest the place where they had reigned should, when they died, remember them no more. With the aid of architect and masons they sought to secure a small measure of immortality and to snatch a century or two from the effacing hand of Time. Goa preaches the vanity of worldly pomp; Bijapur proclaims the pathos of human vanity.

The Sultan Mahommed is buried at Bijapur beneath the widest dome in the world; his mausoleum is of stupendous size. Here he sleeps with two wives, a grandson, a daughter,

and his favourite dancing-girl. The bodies lie in the vaults; but above them, on a raised platform, are six tombs—six tombs and nothing else in that huge building! Never has dusty death been housed in more majestic manner; never has the awfulness of silent void been enshrined with sublimer magnificence. Whisper in the gallery that runs round the dome, and out of the gloom a thousand echoes make answer; stamp your feet, and among the shadows you hear the tread of the dead sultan's armies.

The emperor was buried here in the same year that the body of the monk was laid in his Goanese shrine. Mahommed was a popular sultan; he gave twenty years of peace to his people, a longer period of rest than they enjoyed under any other ruler of that dynasty. He lived his life, he loved his loves, he was rich and gave of his wealth, he built mosques and made public pleasure-gardens, and he improved the city's drainage and its water

supply. In modern language, he was a successful and a good man, as men go. His tomb bespeaks large ideas; it is a monument that may still endure for several centuries. And the end of it all? That monument—what does it embody? Echoes, shadows and a mighty emptiness.

But in that Church of Good Jesus, where the mendicant monk is buried, though it be as empty as the mausoleum, there is life—pulsating life. The sultan is dead; the saint lives. His name is a household word in thousands of homes; his example still encourages toilers up the hill of life; by his actions men and women of this century are inspired with new energy in the weary climb.

Life opened even more pleasantly for Francis Xavier than for Mahommed. The son of a Spanish nobleman, educated in Paris, possessed of a charming personality, the world smiled when he smiled, and where he walked flowers blossomed on either hand. But he

forsook those joyous paths; he gave up thought of love, of home, of lawful ease. He went forth a vagrom preacher, often ill, often in pain. But he found joy in his labours. Even in his loveless, homeless wanderings he tasted the sweets of personal power and success; and also he drank deep of the bitterness of failure—of that most bitter failure when a man doing all he can in a right cause fails to achieve his aim. He died in a Chinese hovel, himself believing his life-work had been well-nigh fruitless. And still he lives!

Is there, then, a balm in moral courage that can save a man's work from corruption? Has personal sacrifice an elixir that can keep the living from the dead? I am persuaded to this belief. Deny the godhead of the Carpenter's Son, and still the Godhead gleams through the suffering limbs of the Son of Man.

Life was never intended to be a quiet pool, screened from rude winds, sheltered from black

frost, open only to the sun. That is stagnation. Though lilies star the surface, sooner or later the waters shall be the breeding-place of poisonous things. Sorrow, toil, and pain are not afflictions sent from heaven, but earth-born trials to test the temper of individuals and of nations, and to prove their fitness to survive. The tears of uncomplaining sorrow are, in truth, springs of sweet water welling from living rock: toil, strongly endured, is bread from heaven, manna in the desert: pain, bravely borne, is a battle-song cheering on to victory both him who sings and those who hear. I laugh at myself for writing these words; they are so trite. Yet many in this Christian country laugh at the words; and others, turning the shoulder, mutter surlily with Peter: "Man, I know not what thou sayest."

CHAPTER II.

I AM afraid I have always been half
IV. a pagan at heart. I have delighted
to perceive in tree, stream and wave
a soul that is not of this world, and yet so
human as to be not quite divine. The great
god Pan has made music for me when I
wandered in the forest; Venus has risen before
me as I dreamed on the dunes above a dimpled
sea. Whenever I have stayed happily in city,
castle, or house, at the last point of view I
have always turned round and raised my hat
reverently in farewell to the genius of the place.
I have entertained a strong belief in fairies,
the Little People who are so kind to indus-
trious serving-men and so spiteful to the lazy
ones.

Nor is this belief wholly of the imagination.


I have always delighted in writing—in endeavouring to portray by words the thoughts that have moved me and the scenes which have given me joy. The very sentences which expressed exactly what I would convey have stirred through my brain of an evening; but, being indolent, I have allowed them to pass, thinking they would surely be there in the morning. But in the morning not a single phrase could I remember; the words were jumbled and the sentences crooked and perverse. The Little People did this: they punished me because I was lazy overnight.

Again, tired I have sat down determined before I slept to complete a good letter. I have torn up page after page; nothing right would come from my pen, but I have persevered until at last, dog-tired and discouraged, I have gone to bed. In the morning, with the same sense of discouragement strong upon me, I have taken up my pen. The words have flown from it: not only has every phrase come

readily, but sentences such as never before had been built in my brain were ready for my use. It was the kindness of the Little People, rewarding my over-night industry. All I had to do was to write as fast as I could.

Words are to me as a pack of hounds.

V. Into the tangled undergrowth of sensations, episodes, ideas, and memories I throw them in. Such is casual conversation. An episode is told, an incident related, an abstract argument started. I sound silently the view-halloa. When alone, I get together the pack, blow the horn, and away we ride full cry. Often we over-run the scent and we must hark back. Sometimes we lose it; so we make a cast forward and pick it up. Away again with a burning scent, making music down the valleys and across the hills—or at least we hope it to be so. Forward, Memory! hustle him, Simile! away there, Epithet! good dog, Common sense! It is no time for slow



hunting, slow argument. The hounds (the words) are running their best. The huntsman has to drive along his horse (his pen) to keep up with them. Who-oo! we have killed our fox. The elusive idea is captured; the fugitive incident is seized and held aloft. Who-oo! Now we may jog home happily; we may close the envelope with content. It has been a merry chase, and we have added one more to the trophies of the hunt (of the pen).

Thus roughly is my regard for words in their relation to daily affairs or trivial questions and problems—that is, to the questions and problems of life's crossways. But words when they follow after great deeds are but yelping whelps, and to bring home a great truth they are lame hounds and dumb.

A great deed is achieved in silence and solitude—in the solitude which the strong man, moving silently, creates for himself in the roughest rush of battle or amid the

bluster of brazen-throated business. The painter or the sculptor can truthfully portray its doing, for canvas and marble, touched by the finger of genius, speak with a power and conviction before which words are empty emblems. It is the voice of a soul talking to a fellow-soul. And heroism—true heroism—is ever wrought through the travail of the soul. A man does not utter words about the deepest thoughts of his life, except perhaps at those rare times when for the moment the current of life seems to be stayed, and he himself stands dismayed between time and eternity.

A great truth can never be conveyed to others merely by words. Here the sculptor and the painter are also impotent. There is one way, and one only way by which men shall be taught the full height and breadth and depth of an eternal verity. It must be lived. Every action of the life must be a sentence in the golden book which shall out-


shine language. Words are the faintest echo of these actions, and the noise of them varies in every land and in the ears of each different people.

You may say that a man must also die for a great truth if it should endure. You may ask, Could Christianity have been possible without the Death upon the Cross? Had Pilate scourged Jesus of Nazareth and allowed Him to go free, would there still have been Christianity?

I decline to found arguments on the Life whose beauty and strength are beyond my understanding. But I do honestly believe that the Crucifixion—that supreme tragedy of the world—and the Resurrection—the cornerstone of the Christian belief in a personal after-life—have exercised a less benign influence on human progress than many of the gentle acts that preceded the pains of Calvary. Consider for an instant the blood that has been brutally outpoured by men who have

sought a blessing from the pierced Hands for the slaughter of their helpless fellow-creatures, in the so-called cause of Him who on the third day, according to the Scriptures, came forth from the Arimathean's new sepulchre. It would make a scarlet river as wide and as deep as the Mississippi, flowing from the foot of Golgotha down to Joppa which is by the sea. In what deepest torment chamber of foul Gehenna's prison-house dwells at this moment the soul of His Most Catholic Majesty Philip II. of Spain? If there be a hell for the souls of evil men, the soul of that man must burn eternally in hell.


No! I do not believe that death is vital to the existence of truth. It may help it; it may hinder it. But Western civilization in this twentieth century places an extraordinarily artificial value on human life. A civilized European regards death—his own death—as the one irretrievable disaster. He judges everything from the individual standpoint. It



is wrong. When war ensues, it is realized that worse things can befall a family, a community, or a nation than the death of one, or ten, or ten thousand individuals. A truer estimate of human life is taken in heathen countries. Life is preferred, but on occasions death is deemed preferable. There are Christians—persons of intelligence—who really seem to believe that no principle is worth living for because there is no chance to die for it. They talk and write as if they would attain a nobler standard of living, were only the fires of Smithfield relighted. This fatuous exaltation of death by a generation frightened to die disfigures much of our literature—nearly all that part of it which has for its object the elevation of childhood. According to its doctrine, the mere act of dying is the supreme renunciation. In the day of battle, in the hour of sudden death, it is found that many shrink from what they have been taught to regard as martyrdom—martyrdom for the sake of

religion or for the love of country. They choose inglorious life beneath the white flag rather than inevitable honourable death.

Life is the vital essence of all great principles. They must be lived every day of the year, in every fibre of the being, until it becomes impossible to separate the inspiration of the heart from the aspiration of the mind or the respiration of the lungs. By chance it may happen that the choice will have to be made whether to adhere to these principles or to continue upon earth. Then the sacrifice of life will be willingly accepted; not from a desire to be counted either as a martyr or a hero, but because it is honestly and sincerely deemed the lesser evil. But death is accidental; life alone is certain. Therefore it were wise to relegate to the background crowns of glory and blood of martyrs and heroes' dying moments. Let us live honest lives.



The most exquisite workmanship in VI. the written language is the Lord's Prayer. We learn to lisp it at our mother's knee; it is often the last prayer that rises from our hearts as the failing pulses beat the last tattoo. Yet how seldom do we pause to consider its fulness and completeness. Each time I repeat it to myself, it recalls new scenes in the battle surging around me. After all these centuries, after the vast progress civilization has made, there is but a single word one would change, and that word cannot be altered because there is none to take its place.

"Give us this day our daily *bread*." A ludicrous demand on the Almighty for a rich man to make, observes a foolish critic. Would he have it altered into "Give us this day our daily *loaf*"? The petition on many occasions would be peculiarly apposite. A dear old lady, whose kindness of heart is unbounded, once told me she thought it rather cruel that a poor man

unable to obtain work should have to utter this petition. There was sense in her remark, if one accepts the literal English meaning; but the Lord's Prayer is an Oriental prayer, originally taught to Oriental peasants.

"Give us this day our daily bread." As I repeat the words, a harvest scene in an Eastern land rises before my eyes. The sun is setting behind the palm-trees. The labourers have come in from the fields and are gathered outside the courtyard of a brown-thatched homestead. Each bears in his hand a platter of leaves roughly stitched together. The farmer's wife comes out to them, followed by two servants carrying a steaming pot. To each labourer she doles out a portion of cooked food, ready to be eaten. This is the daily bread of an Oriental country, and before it is given a man must have performed an honest day's work. Therefore, when in the Lord's Prayer we pray for daily bread, we pray also, though we may not know it, for daily work and for strength to perform the




allotted task. I wish this fact was more generally understood, for many who devoutly utter the prayer would find new strength in it. Never forget that the petition for daily bread carries with it a request for daily work, for the necessary strength to fulfil it, and also for that appetite which is the outcome of honest labour honestly performed. Who is there, rich or poor, who has not need every day of his life to offer up this petition to his Father, who is in heaven ?

Scoffers have asked me to give them a single concrete instance of a prayer which has been answered. When the taunt has been thrown at me among working men, I have unhesitatingly cited: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us." Time after time I have found among the working men and women of England splendid charity and a most Christian tolerance towards the errors and offences of their fellows, which is the direct answer to this prayer. The fruit of this spirit is practical sympathy and kindliness.

"We must not judge him too hardly, he had a rough time of it," they say; "perhaps we should have done the same if we had been in his place."

They judge as they would be judged, and they testify to the sincerity of their words by little acts which imply no small self-sacrifice. They forgive trespasses in a quiet, practical manner, even as they would have their trespasses forgiven. Thereby they acquire a cheerful temperament, for cheerfulness is the outward sign of this inward grace.

The divine sequence of the Lord's Prayer is often unnoticed: daily bread; forgiveness of trespasses; avoidance of temptation; and lastly, deliverance from evil. Paraphrased, the prayer is for healthy work and a cheerful mind amid cheerful and healthy surroundings. Is not this the social problem of our big cities in a nutshell? Many honest-hearted people recognize it to be so; but there still exist far too many pseudo-philanthropists who ~~misinterpret~~ the Lord's order of



material salvation. They would deliver the out-cast from evil by leading him into temptation, or, at least, by compelling him to continue to live under conditions where temptation is rife. They would raise the miserable, not by teaching him to seek forgiveness for his trespasses, but by inspiring him with hatred and envy against those who may have trespassed against him; and they would give the hungry the light, unsatisfying food of careless charity instead of the wheaten bread of honest labour. Fools! blind, stiff-necked fools! in the omniscience of their infinite ignorance they would grease the mills of God because they grind but slowly.

The painter has always seemed to
VII. me the supreme artist. His genius
is able to fire the soul beyond the
power of other men. The very foundations
of our personal religion are, in reality, the
canvases of the Old Masters. The Christ,

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the Mother and the Child, the Master and the Little Children, the Agony in the Garden, and the Dignity of Rome's deepest degradation, Death upon the Cross—what would these scenes be to us if we had not beheld them through the eyes of the inspired painters? The sacred print that hangs above the nursery mantelpiece is a more potent inspiration throughout our lives than any hymn or poem. The poet and the writer—I speak of the masters of the craft—are great artists; but their work suffers because it must be viewed through a thousand prisms. The written word varies according to the light in which it is read; each reader interprets it out of his own experience. True, there live passages which are above this criticism. How few they are!

The work of the painter is as the goodly cedar-tree that stands upon the lawn before my window. When the storms of autumn rage, it is the symbol of patient strength; in summer, pleasanter coolness nowhere can be found than

in its shade. Sunshine gilds its stalwart beauty; frost and snow silver its giant limbs. At dawn it is a tree of glory; in the light of the afterglow a mighty burning bush. Children climb laughingly about its trunk; youth carves true lovers' knots upon its branches; age hears in the gentle sighing of its grey-green boughs old stories of old happiness. Though a limb be lost in the tempest, nothing can mar the grandeur of its symmetry. Go away from it for years; return and look again upon it, and the cedar of Lebanon still towers above the lawn, a living monument of God's most glorious handiwork.

So is the work of the painter. It always carries the same strong message of joy, of hope, or of comfort, no matter whether the world smiles or rages, or whether the pulses beat furiously in the fever-passion of youth or sound the retreat of quickly marching years.

A print of Millet's "L'Angelus" looked down upon me during a great crisis in my life. That picture spoke, as it were, with a

voice from heaven. The genius that inspired it quickened my whole being, thrilling through every fibre. It comforted me when sick at heart, strengthened me when my resolutions weakened and refreshed me when the fight seemed hopeless.

You, of course, are familiar with that painting of Breton folk digging potatoes of an evening. A more commonplace subject for a painter could hardly be conceived—serfs at the most ordinary drudgery. The sun is setting; the birds are flying homeward but the man and woman stay on in the field for their task is not finished. They are tired, and it really could not have signified, even in their small world, whether a few more potatoes were dug that day. From the outer rim of the world, glorified at the evening hour by the golden rays of the setting sun and where a spire lifts to heaven, the Angelus bell rings out. The man uncovers his head, the woman humbly folds her hands

and together they pray reverently. Often in spirit have I stood by the side of those peasants and prayed with them, grateful to be of that little company gathered together in God's name in the open field.

"Laborare est orare." Though the day be long, the labourer tired, and the work the commonest drudgery, work on even when the birds of the air seek their resting-place. The dignity of toil has nothing to do with the nature of the task, so long as it be honest. Be the work of high importance or of little moment, work until night falls, and from the evening sky the Angelus bell shall ring out for you. Reverently you shall bow the head and in all sincerity thank God that you are steadfast. A holy calm shall encompass you, because you exercise manhood's right to stand master of his lower nature. Tired, toil on and the peace of heaven awaits you.

CHAPTER III.

THE capacity of the human heart for
VIII. happiness is unbounded. Yet how
little a thing is needed to turn happiness into misery and for the moment to paralyze the main muscle of man's moral nature! Memory has always been a source of pleasure to me. The pagan philosophy rings false in my ears, that underlies the hackneyed quotation: "A sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things." Sorrow is of the present; it may be in the future; but it cannot be of the past, if heart be brave and brain be healthy. "Let the dead bury their dead." Onward, up the hill! Pause, if you will, for a moment and look backward to reckon the miles you have travelled; but no man has the time to sit down and pule by the wayside

because an hour or two previously the road had been easier or less dusty or better shaded from the sun.

God designed man for joy; it is God's purpose that his memory shall be a storehouse of happy hours. Look back on childhood, and it needs an effort to realize that one was ever really unhappy. Yet each one of us knows that he was utterly miserable on occasions, and was rendered thoroughly wretched through the careless cruelty of his fellows or the thoughtless selfishness of his elders. Have not each of us in his youth cried out at some time or other:


"I am tired of living in Nazareth: I am wearied of having my every action measured by the family footrule. Let me live my own life! Why should it be moulded, fashioned, and shaped to meet the approval of my excellent relations, who lecture me at length on trivial delinquencies as if they carried a whole college of cardinal virtues tucked away

under their liver wing? Let them do as they please: I will do as I please. I will walk my own road; and if I stumble or fall, I am willing to pay the price. Let them be content, if it pleases them, with the lush meadows of conventional respectability; let them be satisfied to stay where they are and never to stray from the safe sheepfold of their own particular set. I will scale the heights."

So we have gone our own way. We have stumbled and fallen and suffered grievously. And in suffering we have compelled others to suffer with us, simply because they love us. If only there were more sympathy with the youthful when they stray, the sins which inflict those deep wounds that heal so slowly, would be far fewer.

In boyhood I rejoiced in walking
IX. home across the fields at dusk when
an October gale howled and raged.
The fight against the wind was glorious.

Boughs crackled, the air was full of dead leaves, every tree rattled its branches. The storm screamed in the gloom as though the country were peopled with ghosts. Now, I was frightened as a squall raged past me, rendering formless the trees so familiar in the day-time but so strange as night fell; then, I grew glad as the first gleam of the moon, very weak and sickly, lightened the darkness. Yet again, I was timorous and hardly dared to go forward because a shadow fell across the road. And I knew it was only a shadow. The gale raged furiously, and I would fight on, frightened by shadows and rejoiced by shadows. Is life, thought I, just a struggle in the twilight among a host of shadows? Is life really like this—to be terrorized by illusions and the false image of things; to be gladdened by moonbeams; to lose one's belief even in the most stoutly-rooted faith, but always to struggle on in the gloom towards home?



During those autumn gales rebellion would run riot in my veins. I wanted to get away from home, to be doing something. Action seemed then the only thing really worth living for. I could not understand how men could be content with the mere weaving of words. I would declare to myself that I would sooner bind the bruised foot of a beggar than preach the most eloquent sermon that had ever echoed beneath the dome of St. Paul's. For in the days of youth action is everything. If we could not be generals and win battles, at least we might be brigands and cut-throats—of course, only the throats of the persons we particularly objected to!

The memories of childhood are delusive. Christmas always appears to me to have been a season of frost and ice and snow; though I believe, if the actual facts were known, it would be found that green Christmases of damp, raw or muggy weather exceeded all others during the first eighteen

years of my life. But the day that saw the coming of the Little Child from Heaven will always be for me the ideal Christmas of the old-fashioned Christmas-card, with glistening snow and scarlet holly-berries and robin-red-breasts—with its contrast of white and red, of infant innocence and of woman's pain.

The delicious outbursts of premature spring that so often happen in February were always a joy to me. I would fancy that the old beldame, Winter, had been telling of the glory of her youth; and, forgetting her wrinkles and snowy hair, a smile had come over her withered features, and for the moment she had resumed the charm of maidenhood. It was so delightful to loll in the sunshine sniffing in the fragrance of the good brown earth.

Dear Mother Earth! It was on days like those that I learned why the old men called you mother; why, when sorrow came, they told their grief to you, and to you carried such triumphs as life held for them, and at

last slept on your lap such a sound, sound sleep.

Then came March, and with March white violets—wild white violets, the purest jewels in the diadem of Spring. Where the thorns are thickest they grow best. I knew only one spot where wild white violets might be picked without pain. It was in an old churchyard. There, clustering close to some ancient headstones, was a little colony of this exquisite wild-flower. I hardly ever picked them, except maybe two or three which I wore as an amulet against evil thoughts; for I believed that those pure flowers were the blossoming of homely virtues, which had graced the quiet lives of the poor rotting bones six feet below. It is literally true that these violets only grew in front of the headstones where the coffins lay. This, no doubt, was due to the eastern aspect, but I preferred to forget that fact and to cling to my gentle superstition.

There is a spinney of coppiced oaks, carpeted with ground ivy, upon a hill, then and still famous for its white violets. Round it are ploughed fields, and from the brown clods in the early weeks of the year skylarks rise, filling the vault of heaven with the mirth of spring. They nest on that hill-top. From them as a boy I drew courage. That this bird of homely habit, dwelling on the humblest land (for one must call the soil humble that for generation after generation has afforded the simplest form of livelihood to simple folk), should be able by its song not only to inspire poets, but to make every human being who hears it proud of his birthright and eager to emulate the singer, and bring happiness to men, is, and ever must be, a source of strength. It tells the message that, no matter how lowly your lot, you are still able to add joy to the world. That is no little thing. How happy were the world if tears never flowed; how cheerful and serene the homes of men if only

smiles and jollity abounded! Who can weep when the lark sings above the brown upland that bares a rough bosom to the first kisses of the vernal sun?

As they gave the owl to Athena, so I would assign the skylark to Britannia, the guardian goddess of my homeland—that small bird in whose plumage there is not one gaudy feather, and in whose song not one false note. It is the herald of happiness at an hour when earth is desolate. Already it has prepared itself a nest; and, its work accomplished, it rises on steady wing and pours forth an anthem of humble triumph. The same simple pride should stir in the heart of every man who has done his work well, whatever the work may be. If expressed, it should be uttered in gentle harmony for the delight of the dear ones in the nest; not boastfully or garishly, as the coarse-bred fowl crows from the village dunghill just to draw attention to itself. When the lark sings in the sky, you listen

to the song and forget the bird. But the bird goes on singing.

There is the memory of a Sunday afternoon in perfect summer weather spent under an oak-tree on that hill from which the prospect is so wide and fair. Already the cornfields were tinged with gold, and as the breeze passed gently over them they yielded a thousand shades of colour. The tints were to me notes in Nature's melody. Shouting and laughter came from afar, where merry groups of school-children wandered. The sounds were in harmony with the music of the day. The only noise that disturbed the Sabbath calm was the din of the one Sunday train down the valley. It passed, and in passing emphasized the sweet silence of the afternoon. I felt that my senses were too gross to catch the strains of that anthem chanted by sun and earth and air and sky. Have you not felt this in a summer garden? The warmth of the day, the fragrance of the

flowers, the hum of the bees, the splashing of distant fountains, the passing breezes, the play of shadow and sunshine, the colours of leaf and blossom—all these are but notes in a vast organ melody that is too full, too round, for human ears to hear. We perceive that it is there; and when it ceases we realize the void.

Whoever has been brought up in an
X. English village let him count himself fortunate. The country parsonage and the country farmhouse have supplied the nation with great men; from one came Nelson, from the other Shakespeare. Earth grows to be a kind stepmother to the country boy. Abraham Cowley understood this when he wrote: "God the first garden made, and the first city Cain." Yet in the city man's intellect reaches a nobler height, while in the country his moral nature, despite its many flaws, is the finer. The faults and even the vices of

urban and rural life are attributable in no small degree to the undevelopment of moral nature in one place and of intellect in the other. If only God had planted London in the Garden of Eden, man never would have fallen.

Human sympathies are widened and deepened in the country, often in an unexpected manner. An old woman—a special friend of mine in boyhood—had a horrid habit of asking me to inspect an ulcer on her leg whenever I called on her. One warm afternoon I ventured to protest. She let loose a torrent of rebuke, rating me roundly, more in sorrow than in anger, on my bad manners. She concluded her lecture thus sadly: “It is only the doctor, my daughter, and you that I allows to see my poor dear leg.” She had offered me the highest honour in her power, and I had rejected it. Since then my capacity for sympathy always has been lively, and I have ever been prepared to perceive honour in the least expected quarter.

For women to smoke is no new thing. When I was a boy most of the old women in the village smoked clay pipes and shag while they made lace. They had their favourite pipes and their favourite bobbins. The younger women had already given up smoking and lace-making. One old lady I can still see in her cottage, sitting in the fire-light, with the lace pillow before her and the bobbins flashing under her quick fingers, while she chatted and laughed ; she would pause now and again for a whiff from her black cutty, and the little spittoon under her rush-bottomed chair was busy.

Great thanks I owe to this village dame. She was the first to teach me the pleasure of doing things ; from her I had my earliest lesson in the dignity of toil. I can remember well the steel needles and the dirty-coloured string with which I knitted, she guiding my hands, a pair of garters for her. I must have been about six years old. The work lasted

certainly all one winter, probably through two. The garters were about a yard in length, and in breadth varied from three stitches to half a span. She wore them on Sundays for many a year; and if I would take any one to call on her of a Sunday afternoon, they were unravelled from above the knee and held up with pride as my handiwork. Hard work has never won for me more generous praise.

The poacher was always the black sheep of the village and the black beast of the gamekeepers. I do not refer to thieves who pilfer a game preserve as they rob a hen roost, but to the old village poacher who sniggled and pouched the Squire's hare when honest folk were abed or at church. A wicked man of this sort once created a sensation by coming most unexpectedly to church. He had never been seen inside church on a Sunday before, least of all on a Sunday morning. That he should come

late, enter sheepishly, and sit in the first free pew was natural. The tongues of the village gossips went wagging until the mystery was cleared up.

The old poacher had been at his usual godless games in the fields below the village. He was in the act of taking a hare from a noose when the burly form of a keeper appeared round the hedge. Thrusting the hare, still alive, into his pocket, he bolted, hotly pursued. As he passed the church the open door suggested sanctuary. It was the only place in the village where no one would look for him. He sat through the service with the poor brute of a hare struggling in his pocket, his only fear being that it might get its head free and scream "Ma" during the parson's sermon.

At first sight it always seems harsh that any one class should have the sole right to exercise that love of sport which is more or less inherent in every healthy Anglo-Saxon.

Why should this privilege be made a matter of pounds, shillings and pence? The wild beasts of the field ought to be free to all men; certainly those who live on the soil should have more right to hunt them than the man from London who pays cash down and hits beater or dog as often as partridge or hare. That is the first point of view; but is it a right one?

Forget the game laws for the moment and regard the game, not as it appears in the poulterer's shop, but in field and woodland. What would our English landscape be like without its game? Never a cock-pheasant sunning itself by the covert side: never a partridge calling from September's stubble: never a mad hare circussing on March grassland: never a rabbit fading, ghostlike, into the spinney on a midsummer night: never a fox breaking cover to the shout of the view-halloa: never call of "cock forward" or the 'scape of unexpected snipe: never a

phalanx of wild duck streaming forth from the orange gateways of December's setting sun! Or go farther north, never the crow of grouse among the heather, or the bell of a stag down the glen! All these sights and sounds must disappear; for repeal the game laws and the game becomes free to every man. A man must entertain a very low and false idea of Anglo-Saxon enterprise, who could imagine that without the present protective legislation the wild life of England would continue even for a generation. Do away with these laws, henceforth the farmer will legitimately shoot the fox that robs his hen roost, and the farm-labourer will legitimately pot the hare that in winter nibbles his Brussels sprouts. Abolish the game laws and poaching is abolished; but a brief era of butchery is instituted, and afterwards desolation falls on the country-side.

Suppose Parliament to have permitted the indiscriminate slaughter of the creatures we

call game by the abrogation of this special legislation, think you it would stop there? No! The Mother of Parliaments cannot spank the sporting instinct out of naughty Nimrod. In place of partridge and pheasant we shall preserve blackbird and thrush; the nightingale will take the place of the woodcock, the chiff-chaff of the jack snipe, and deprived of a snapshot at a hustled bunny, we shall have to find what pleasure we may in stalking the mild cock-robin. So they do in France. Having destroyed the wild life of merrie England, we shall make haste to exterminate its wild song. The form of the hare will be void, and thrush never dare offer matins or evensong from winter's bare bough but it fall an instant victim to debased sport.

I advocate game laws; but also I am in favour of poaching, which is a natural and healthy protest against this class legislation. To confess the truth, the whole truth, game laws must always be a little harsh in operation,

and must often provide an opportunity for parochial petty tyranny. It will be a bad day for the country when the village poacher becomes extinct. Then apathy and a slothful acquiescence in things as they are will have overtaken rural life, which will forebode ill for the nation, for they are the symptoms of a decadent people.

They think little of death in the
XI. villages. They accept his presence
as a matter of course, and the grisly
horrors and terrors with which novelists and
playwrights surround his approach appear unreal to simple country-folk. Often, when clothed in rusty black they follow with mournful step the coffin of a dear relation, they are "onion-eyed," as Shakespeare knew the phrase. In Midland villages in his days, as now, an onion cut in half was held in the kerchief in which the face and nose were buried, in order to bring those tardy tears to the eyes,

which the fountain of a sincere heart had refused to supply. It was and is done not from hypocrisy, but as a sign of respect.

There was a day of grief in the village of my childhood I can never forget. No man, woman, or child was onion-eyed that day. I walked in the slow procession, and they told me it was my duty to be brave. They strewed flowers above the coffin, but they did not strew them thick enough. "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." I heard the familiar words. Then came the hopeless, hollow sound of falling earth. My courage fled. I broke down utterly. "Earth, Earth, why art thou so cruel? Mother Earth, hast thou no pity!"

The tears eased my pain, and I have thought since that some such answer must have been whispered back to me:

"My son, it is not I who am cruel. Man in his pride boasts his immortality, yet grudges his mortality to my embrace. In his grief he speaks of the soul, but thinks only on the

clay. Hollow is man's pride; without hope his selfish grief. Weep, my child, weep for all that thou hast lost: dry thine eyes, my child, and remember all that has been won."

Poor people accept death in a right and natural spirit. They neither desire it nor fear it. Now and again it deals a heavy blow, plunging a family into misery; but far more often it is not an affliction, but a relief. For every blow Death strikes, he kisses thrice.

The village wedding-breakfasts are a
XII. happy memory. One in particular I remember. I sat on the right hand of the bride, the bridegroom on her left. We began with cat-lap, then roast beef; and plum-pudding to wind up with. The hour was noon. Cat-lap, by the way, is Yorkshire pudding baked under the beef, rich batter swimming in grease: the most delicious dish, if you are really hungry. The idea is that a good helping will dull the keenest

appetite before the expensive beef comes on. It would, were only an ordinary stomach in question; but the holiday appetite of village Gargantuas is not to be deluded by a simple device of this kind. To counteract the cloying grease they deluge the batter with vinegar. A wedding guest of healthy appetite will eat close on two pounds of prime beef after a huge helping of Yorkshire pudding.

Weddings of social importance, from a village point of view, usually took place on a general holiday. After the wedding-breakfast the men guests, many of them, would withdraw to the belfry and peal the bells. The music of church bells always makes me happy; it is so sincere. Every bell has been tried in the fire; iron tongue strikes sterling metal. The peals sweep over the valley in an outburst of glad sound that keeps its note of gladness to the farthest echo. This shouting of the church bells is a Te Deum of sincerity. Their knell is as sincere; it is the deepest cry of lamentation.

Sincerity is my favourite virtue, and the one which I have found most hard to practise.

Those humble marriage-feasts always stirred in me a sense of deep delight. As it was in Cana of Galilee nineteen hundred years ago, so it is in Cana of England to-day. There is the same hospitality, the same desire to provide the best for all; and often, I am afraid, the same disappointment and humiliation that would have overtaken that Galilean house of feasting, had not the Son of Man been present.

Why, oh! why will they teach the miracle in its literal sense? It hurts me to think of it in that way. It was nothing for the Son of God to command that water be made wine—nay, it was needless ostentation. But take it for granted that at the village wedding Christ accepted his humanity as on the day that He ascended the cross, and then the miracle becomes indeed a miracle.

Tasting the thin wine generously pressed upon Him and upon all that entered the house,

His sympathy discerned the trouble that disturbed the happiness of his humble hosts. They had saved the jars against the wedding of their child, but now their friends crowded in so numerous that the scanty store—it was all they had—would hardly suffice.

Below the eaves of the house were set the water-pots which Eastern women fill at the village well. The water is used for washing; but it is the custom for all who are thirsty to drink from the pots in an ordinary way, as from a pump. On that wedding-day—a day of pride and joy—what shame, what disgrace to expect your guests to quench their thirst in so common a manner !

Behold the Son of Man ! The narrow rooms are crowded, groups gather before the door. Unnoticed He passes down the street. He pauses before the house of a man more fortunate in this world's goods than his neighbours, and speaks as no mortal tongue has spoken since. He tells that the pride of those lowly people is a

right pride, that their joy is an honest joy. He does not command that the water shall be converted into wine, but He appeals that the wine of those poor folks' gladness shall not be turned into the water of humiliation. So from the rich man's cellar the poor man's store is replenished.

No one in that hour of excitement notices it. Perhaps with His own hands He carries the water-pots, now filled to the brim with a generous vintage; so that when the master of the ceremonies calls for more drink, trembling lest only water be forthcoming, the best wine is poured out. Surely this were indeed a divine miracle—to discern the trouble which the poor man's pride would conceal, and to touch the heart of the rich man so that he should give without thought of thanks or gratitude.

CHAPTER IV.

A DAY comes once to each one of
XIII. us when all the world is changed.

Earth has caught the hues of heaven.
Everything is actually as it was yesterday,
but to-day there shines an effulgence which
transfigures life. Love dawns. The dew of
that morning diamonds the wayside grass, the
thorn-bushes are jewelled by it; in its light
nothing appears mean, the very dust at our feet
is powdered gold. Be the road steep, would it
were steeper that we might prove our courage!
In the rays of that new sun the mists disperse,
so that we see how goodly is our heritage if we
have but the strength to walk on boldly even
when the grey mists gather again around us.

Beast calls to beast, but the cry bells to the
Throne of Heaven, echoing among heights

unknown before. The petal blows that the seed may fall and the beauty of the earth be renewed. Love and the flower are alike in this. But the fragrance of the flower of Love is a waft from Heaven's eternal springtime. In that vernal hour, brief though it may be or soon forgotten, we enter into our birthright; for then we know that though the roots be fixed firmly in the mire of our brute nature, we inherit the wondrous power to train the plant so that it shall blossom on the everlasting plains and add its perfume to the airs of Paradise.

The most acute mental agony probably endured during life is when in youth true love has been rejected or forbidden. For the first time a pain is felt which human sympathy is powerless to ease. It must be borne in loneliness, and the very excess of suffering serves only as an occasion for ridicule. Love leads to heaven, but Love's torment opens hell. I speak of the passion as youth experiences it in its noblest form. The lonely struggle that marks

every soul-crisis of life is then fought out for the first time, and though the wrestler may not know it, his life will turn largely on the manner in which he bears himself through those early hours of suffering.

For he said : " Fight on ! fight on ! "

Though his vessel was all but a wreck,

.

And himself he was wounded again, in the side and
the head,

And he said : " Fight on ! fight on ! "

Tennyson in those four lines sets forth the creed of the brave—of brave men and brave women : never give in, always fight on, though the ship be a wreck and you yourself be wounded again and again. When youth is smitten to the knee in a hopeless but honest love passion, if courage be high and the heart pure, the verity and wisdom of this creed are learned, and the lesson is never forgotten.

Love's unhappiness is another illustration that memory refuses to harbour misery. Who,

sitting opposite Fat and Forty, his good neighbour's wife, can fail to smile at the thought that those same charms at Sweet Seventeen had whipped him to the mouth of hell. Yet so it was. And now he laughs!

I hold that the gold of life is buried beneath the hearthstone. But a man has to dig hard for it even there; it has to be won in the sweat of his face. Nothing in this world worth having has escaped the primeval curse. Marriage is at least as old as man; and, curiously, the unions that often turn out best in this work-a-day world are those which most nearly approach the primitive ideal. When the world was young, the man went forth hunting and the woman stayed at home. She cooked the food, mended garments and weapons, and tilled the soil before the hut; he killed the beast, skinned it, and brought it home, flesh and hide. The child came; her work redoubled, and he had to hunt the harder. It sounds strange to say so at this

period of civilization, but it is undoubtedly true that many of the happiest homes of England to-day are those where almost identical conditions prevail. Husband and wife—they each work for the other and look for their happiness in the other's happiness, and together they toil for the children.

A friend considerably older than myself once told me he had noticed that as a rule the most ordinary marriages were the most satisfactory ones. Husband and wife fall in love; after a few chance meetings they marry, knowing really very little of each other. They squabble and quarrel through the first year, kiss and are friends again. Then the baby arrives; henceforward the man reverences the woman as the mother of his children, and the woman is grateful to the man for her motherhood. It is not an idyllic view of matrimony, but it is a healthy one. There is nothing more pathetic than to witness the ruin of married lives, as I have witnessed it

more than once, knowing that the downward road began at the new-made grave of an only child.


They who marry trusting only in Providence are rightly blamed, for Providence is the god of the improvident; but they also should be censured who avoid marriage because it implies a constant struggle. A brutal aspect of modern industrial life is the bullying of the married; because a man having wife or children dependent on him dare not hit back as he would do were he single, and so has to be content with a lower wage and to endure persecution, as the penalty for having abandoned unwedded selfishness.

But a happy home is worth a high price. Within its quiet walls you never stand idle; there is always joyful work ready to hand if happiness is to flourish and heaven to be approached. Marriage was instituted in order to replenish heaven just as much as to replenish the earth; therefore the union is a sacrament,

and we pledge good comradeship in consecrated wine.

The birth of the first-born is one of XIV. the most momentous experiences of life. I once stayed with friends in India during such an event. On the morrow I was permitted as a special privilege to see the wife and the baby. She looked so fragile after the weary agony, but beautiful in her happiness. I bowed the knee as I entered her presence, for my eyes beheld the Sanctity of Motherhood. In that moment I realized that a joy is given to woman far excelling any pleasure lifted to the lips of man.

On the previous day I had sat with the husband during the long hours. She had been very brave, declining to accept an anodyne, so that the mother might be in full possession of her senses when her first child entered the world, and resolutely refusing to utter a groan, lest the father should



feel grief that he had brought the wife to the pains of motherhood.

He knew this. He understood the silent suffering endured in the room near by. He talked spasmodically and excitedly. Words he said which can never be repeated, but some things I may write down; for, after all, men are not the mere bestial sires of men that certain strange women who write would have their generation believe.

He said this, speaking in deepest reverence and in a voice strained to a whisper (there was not the smallest hint of blasphemy):—
“The Immaculate Conception is repeated constantly. The modern mother may be—and often is—as pure and undefiled as the Virgin. A woman with heart crystal clear and breast unstained by animal cravings, which through prayer and steadfastness she has brought into subjection, but who yields to embraces sanctified by Christ, is as immaculate as the Mother of God. Her purity will shame the man into

a contempt for his grosser passions, and will endue him with new strength to control them."

Again he startled me. In the stress of his anguish, occasioned by the knowledge of his wife's sufferings, and also, I think, by the new thoughts which broke upon him from he knew not where, he walked rapidly up and down the verandah, breaking off the fronds of delicate ferns and crumpling in his hands the scarlet and golden foliage of tropical plants.

He cried out:—"I believe in the life everlasting—in immortality after death. I desire it, I pray for it. But immortality before birth—why has no man spoken to me of it? Neither from altar nor from platform has ever fallen on my ears a word of consolation on this terrible doubt. Am I and that suffering girl at this hour calling into its first existence a being that shall never—and never—and never—and never die? Oh, horrible! Horror beyond the power of man to measure! She

may die and I may die, and the child be left to careless strangers. Badly trained, in ignorant presumption he commits a deadly sin, dies, and through all the æons our child will moan in unceasing torture! This I have been taught to believe, and I believe that I believe it. At this instant, before the newborn soul can enter the tiny limbs, ought I not to slay her in her innocent agony and to slaughter myself, the monster that has begotten a framework of clay wherein a Soul may be housed to matriculate for an eternity of damnation!


“Two of the human species come together, sodden with drink, lower than the lowest beasts. A child is conceived, and for its body a soul which can never know death must be newly fashioned by the hands of the Omnipotent. Do you see this fearful vision? Do you feel the horror that is crushing me? Can Eternal Life be created by the chance of hot lust or even by the soft deliberations of con-

secrated love? No, no! If there be life beyond the grave, there must be life before the cradle. The birth-pang may be the beginning, but then the death-rattle must be the end!"

He quieted down, and we sat for some time without speaking—in absolute silence. It was like the stillness that heralds dawn. A cry rang through the house—a child's cry! We looked at each other. He was trembling all over. I could feel the water to my eyes racing with the laughter to my lips. Presently one came from the sick-room. All was well. It was a girl. With tears streaming down a face radiant with triumph he gripped me by the hand and said:


"A funny world! We all enter it with a cry; most of us leave it with a smile."

Soon afterwards I returned to my
XV. home among my favourite forests. I
led a lonely existence at that time,
seldom seeing a white face or hearing a white




man's voice. The loneliness was not perhaps very healthy, but still I often rejoiced in it, although it carried a heavy penalty. Good people who have never known exile, far less solitude in exile, cannot realize the pain, an almost physical pain, that seizes on a man in his black hours when he cries out for the sight of familiar features, for the echo of tones well loved, for the glimpse of a vista rendered dear by memories of childhood. It seemed sometimes to me that this torment was a foretaste of the bitterness of death.

There was a slope not a mile away from my bungalow where I delighted to sit in the golden twilight. Westward the crown of the hill rises steeply. To the east, but many miles away, other hills ascend. In the intervening space is a lovely tumbled landscape of little hills clothed in forest, of narrow mountain meadows and broad stretches of cultivated fields. At one season of the year the fields are of a rich brown after the



plough has done its work; then they are splashes of the most vivid verdure where the young crops spring up; yet again they are white to harvest.

The play of shadow and sunshine on the hills constantly calls into life new hues, and new beauties never seen, or, perhaps more truthfully, never comprehended before. They are the pleasant surprises of Nature. The changes in the cultivated lands, slower in operation and more crudely marked, are the delights which the industry of man provides for an idle dreamer. Verily, I was idle when I reclined on that hillside! A gun, loaded with ball, would lie across my knee. If a stag, nobly antlered, were to have stepped from the forest within range, or any other creature which it were not a crime to kill, my dreams would have vanished in an instant. Not seldom I lingered there until the stars were the only light along the forest track. An owl would make melancholy moan in a



spinny near by, or the shriek of a jackal shiver the silver silence. There was always the danger that a marauding bear might be met, but I had a gun; and I comforted myself with the thought that no worse peril awaits a man between his London club and his house in Mayfair—only then it is not the bear but the bore. So I would mutter this little maxim for my solace: “Better for a hungry man to meet a bear if he have a gun, than to meet a bore if he be only armed with an umbrella.”

One evening, shortly after my return, I rested on that hillside until very late. It was a perfect evening, and the soft sadness of the gloaming encompassed me. I was thinking much of my friends. Ever in my ears ran that cry of their new-born babe and the agonized questionings of the father. The individual responsibility for another's existence had never presented itself to me before, nor the doubts of life before birth which it

naturally involves. It must be a very old question, for no man of intelligence can well avoid it in some form or other at the hour when for the first time he becomes a father.

In the absolute loneliness of the tropical forest, free from every influence that binds the soul to the soil, it would seem to me that the Sentient Being could become detached from Carnal Clay. I—that is, all of me that was not of the earth earthy—would float in mid-air, surveying the common curves of this plain yet pleasant planet, and endeavouring to discern what might lie beyond the mists that gather so thickly above the pastures of perfect peace whither I would be led.

That night my thoughts dwelt on the birth of the child. I imagined I saw God on a high hill, sitting on a great White Throne. Companies of angels keep guard. Each company stands in due order. There is no equality in heaven. The archangels, with helmets of translucent light, cluster closely on

the higher slopes near the Throne. Beyond the angel cohorts are gathered the souls of mortal men through a vast spaciousness. To mortal ears silence reigns over the heavenly plain—an amber-tinted silence full of sound. But there is no outward sound. Not a word is uttered—it were too gross a thing. As eye meets eye, heart leaps to heart; the thought unspoken passes to the breast unheard. The silence lives, and in it everything unjust, cruel, and impure dies. Truth and kindness alone abide in the pure atmosphere of heaven. Here for a season rest the souls of mortal men, renewing their beauty and their strength. They know each other as they knew each other on earth, but in a manner utterly beyond the comprehension of purblind humanity.

What is the span of man's maturity to a Soul that lives for ever? It can only be as the waking moments of sleep, the brief seconds in which the dream is formed. As a dream the life on earth appears to the soul

after death. Commingling in a breast, now purged from sensuous sympathy and the evanescent prejudices of hatred and contempt, are those pure sentiments of love and gentleness which have uplifted man to his heavenly home. It is impossible to picture adequately that wondrous region, for life after death must ever be as incomprehensible to us in this existence as our life is to the bacillus that swims in our veins.

One, bearing in his hand a trumpet, passes to the footsteps of the Throne. Across the level plains of light rolls the command of the Creator:

“Let a Soul be born!”

Obedience is instant in heaven. A soul, now renewed in this haven of amber calm, moves outward, ready for a new sojourn upon earth. He who carries the trumpet raises it to his lips. In the angel cohorts other trumpets are uplifted. A great wave of melody bursts over that pellucid sphere: “A Soul is born!”

Not in noise, but in ripples of radiant light that gather and break over the uttermost mists of the celestial plain, the message is carried downward. The conches of the day-dawn take up the strain. Now the message passes to earth, ever growing fainter, until all that reaches human ears is the thin cry of a new-born babe.

“A Soul is born!”

And a woman in her anguish has caught the echo of the command of the Creator. She hears in the first cry of her first-born the far melody of the trumpets of heaven—the golden trumpets of everlasting life. Her suffering is stayed, her pain is over; she rejoices that a Soul is born into the world.

“Children are a parent's perquisite.”

XVI. This old patriarchal aphorism dies hard; even now civilization has hardly passed beyond that initial stage of revolt when

the mind jumps to the opposite extreme: "Parents are the personal property of the child!" This apothegm is the rule in many homes, and is defended on the ground that under the older saying the child often suffered grievously.


We talk glibly of the training of children, but seldom we define our meaning. It is comparatively rare to find a parent who has given the same degree of exact thought to child-training that a gardener bestows on the training of a fruit-tree against a sunny wall. The gardener's one object—the final test of his skill—is that the tree shall bear plentiful fruit in due season, not that he himself shall win easy praise or avoid careless censure, by pruning the shoots or nailing up the boughs on the advice of every passer-by. He may fail, for the seasons may be unpropitious; the wall against which the tree grows may be struck by lightning, or an unseen canker develop at the root. But he so guides and

orders the young wood, lopping off here a gormandizer that makes only for leaf, there encouraging the growth of fruit-bearing branches, that in most years his purpose is fulfilled. The tree stands secure against the usual storms, and receiving the fullest flood of sunshine, it blossoms freely, the blossom sets well, and the fruit ripens fairly, and is plentiful and sweet.

Sincerity, happiness, work : these three, they are the trinity of true manhood—sincerity the creator, happiness the mediator, work the consoler. They should form a motto for the training of children.

Sincerity is as the finger of God; if it touches aught, that thing lives. Sincerity is the echo of the Saviour's voice, bidding Lazarus come forth from the tomb. Sincerity gives lustre to the lowliest task, adds dignity to the humblest office, and is ever a stumbling-block in the path of fools and Pharisees. For sincerity is the quality which teaches a

man to be true to himself, apart from the opinion of his neighbour. It is the touchstone to distinguish the intrinsic value of things from their relative value. A person flagrantly rude on the ground that he is sincere is as foolish as one who would refuse to pay a debt in silver coin, because the white metal contained, say, in half-a-crown is not intrinsically worth the eighth part of the actual gold in a sovereign, the unit of value. There are certain habits and conventions which have passed into currency among civilized peoples, among nations, and again among different classes of a nation; they have been stamped by a recognized die; they are in daily use, and are accepted as tokens and not for their sterling value. The "Not at home" that the servant utters when the person you call on is indoors but busily engaged: the "Thank you" that you yourself say to the omnibus conductor as he forces a ticket upon you, they are but the penny



pieces of life, of excellent service in the daily going to and fro, and though of small value, still of appreciable value, not for the metal that is in them but for the stamp that is on them. It is not insincere to make use of these penny pieces; but it is insincere, and more than insincere, to try and pass a gilded shilling for a golden pound. Sincerity is hard to practise because it alone can tell you when you may change honestly the gold of principle into the silver currency of expediency. Where this change should never be made under any circumstances, the difficulty is not great; but cases occur daily where to make the change is not only justifiable but right, and when you alone can, and must, at once decide for yourself.

Children are by nature sincere. Listen to their laughter: it comes from the heart and is a melody that rings true, it is the song and chorus of sincerity. Encourage the

quality. Do not compel them to believe that their conduct depends upon what other people think about them: that there is one set of manners for the nursery and another for the drawing-room: that there is one tone of voice for their friends and another for the servants. Train the child to be the sole arbiter of his own actions. Do not appeal to him to be good in order to please his parents, but teach him to be good to please himself. The insincere talk and act as they think the other person thinks they ought to speak and do. But the sincere act and talk straight from the natural fountain of the heart, guided only by that adaptive instinct which has enabled humanity to attain to its present state.

The key-note of the right training of children lies in the two words: "Be happy." The graces of child-nature flower as beautifully in an atmosphere of happiness as the gay crocuses open in the grass under the sunshine of early

spring. If you be fortunate to have a well-populated nursery, this doctrine of happiness is the easiest possible one to instil.


“Be happy! It is the will of God that you shall be as happy as you can be in this world; but as you each have an equal right to happiness, it naturally follows that it is wrong for any one of you to withdraw happiness from the other. You must each of you make your ideas of happiness coincide more or less with the happiness of others.”

This is true Socialism, pure and undefiled; it should be the precept of every nursery and schoolroom.

Many are the little ways which a grown-up person can point out to a child, where he may increase his own happiness by adding to the happiness of others. Nothing sounds more silly in my ears than to hear parents warn their children before a children's party in their own house after this fashion: “My dears, remember

this afternoon you must not please yourselves, but you must please your little friends." It would be infinitely wiser to say: "My dears, try this afternoon to please yourselves *by* pleasing your little friends." A child with its natural quickness of perception would soon realize the higher form of pleasure.

Oh! that loathly word "accomplishment!" with its genteel meaning of "a child's power to show off in order to gratify the personal vanity of its parents, by winning empty applause from people who probably despise in their heart the whole lot of them." Teach the child that the only true accomplishment is—accomplishment, fulfilment, achievement. Whether it be a game of play or the noblest duty, let it be completed in the same spirit as it is begun. Let him feel the full weight of that burden of drudgery which all must bear who would bring any enterprise, anything in this world worthy of achievement, to the summit of success. Do not out of mistaken kindness lift the weight from his



shoulders, but make music for him as he bravely trudges upward; be a good comrade, waken in his heart the joy of toil, until, the hill surmounted, the burden is laid down, and pride shines in the young eyes that he has had the strength to carry so heavy a load to such a height, slight though the height and load may seem to you. You cannot deck too early in life the brow of childhood with the crown of wild olives. Only, the crown must be won rightly before it is bestowed.

Heaven alone should bring unhappiness to the early years of life. A child of healthy mind and body, who has been properly trained, should of itself always be happy. Tears and sadness, when not the result of sickness or natural grief, are due to the selfishness or stupidity of grown-up people. There are, of course, the passing clouds of mutual unkindness; but each generation, left to itself, is more or less kind to itself. Children should be as the roses about the porch: wayward and not without thorns, but shedding

fragrance on the home both at the going out and at the coming in.

But you may say one day the bud may fall before the flower opens. The dear petals lie broken and dead in the dust at the threshold. What then? It is a time for silence and the sympathy of silence. The wound is a cruel one, it will bleed terribly; let it bleed until its own outpouring staunches it. Keep it clean; do not let anything evil or foul enter into it so that it fester. Think not you have been singled out for divine vengeance or ruthless punishment. Why in the battle does the bullet blind and not kill: why does the sword disfigure and not destroy? The blow has fallen; be brave and bear it. The wound will heal, and it may be hidden; though to the last hour if a hand be laid roughly on it, or circumstances change so that you remember what might have been, it will ache and ache again. Or perhaps there will always remain an ugly gash, marring the whole beauty of your life. You must accept it bravely. Courage has a

comeliness of her own; and to courage through long weeks of suffering is presently given a healing virtue, so that others who suffer if they do but touch the hem of her garment, go on their way with their pain eased and the worst smart taken from their wounds.

CHAPTER V.

SACRIFICE ROCK leaps fifty feet out of
XVII. the sea, a dozen miles from the Indian
coast. A pale pinnacle of grey granite, split in two by the force of the waves, seen from the shore in the clear light of dawn, when the sea is so calm that not even a ripple whispers to the sands, it shines a great white throne above a sea of glass. The waves through numberless years have hollowed out the granite on one side; elsewhere it descends steeply to the depths. On this sloping shelf one may rest comfortably. The name derives from a tragedy now three hundred years old. A Portuguese galleon fell into the hands of Hindu pirates; the crew and passengers were landed on this rock, their throats cut with some show of ceremony,

and their bodies flung to the pearl-grey waters. It was rough vengeance for the Inquisition.

I slept alone one night on Sacrifice Rock, sailing there in a fishing-boat late in the afternoon. Having landed me, the Hindu crew laid off, letting anchor in deep water out of sight; so I seemed a castaway on a naked crag in mid-ocean. Miles away, the faint outline of the coast was visible in the moonlight; the moon herself swung clear from a violet velvet vault. The isolation was complete, but there was no sense of solitude; the stars winked at me, the winds sighed, and the waves gossiped. I tried to keep awake in order to watch the hour when wind and wave should fall asleep, but the lullaby of the tropical night was too slumbrous: my vigil ended quickly.

It is curious how after all these centuries the old instinct of primeval man is latent in the blood. In the beginning man slept beneath the open sky, and beneath the open sky he sleeps now more soundly and with less sense of fear

than in fortress or house. One evening I had returned to my bungalow to find news that a tiger had killed a calf on a neighbouring hillside. There wanted half-an-hour to sunset when I sat down on the ground behind a bush (no tree being near), to wait for the beast. The next thing I perceived was the moon in mid-sky. Had there been another kill that night, it would have been to the tiger's credit. After three hours' sound sleep I awoke with instant alertness of brain, but with none of that nervousness that overtakes a man waking suddenly in bed and thinking he hears a creak on the stair.

When it blows hard, to be indoors inspires in me vague uneasiness; but a storm at sea evokes the maddest moments of excitement. During a hurricane on the Atlantic, I managed one night to get on deck and to tuck myself away safely out of sight. The ship crawled up black mountains of water, paused, balanced on the crest, and fell with a shudder in the deep trough. Now and again a green sea swept the deck, but the

ship righted herself and fought on. It seemed impious for man to defy the elements with his trumpery tin kettle, but the tin kettle was the stronger. I shouted in triumph at the storm, and for the first time I felt to the full what it really meant to be Man—the being to whom God had given dominion over earth and sea.

With the memory of that experience strong upon me, I wrote the following letter, which tells of another experience—when man contends with man.

“We sail the Atlantic to-day on an XVIII. almost even keel. A gentle breeze blows athwart the deck and the sun shines brightly. It is difficult to realize that hardly more than a day ago we were fighting a hurricane and labouring amid heavy seas, doubting if we should see another sunrise. The only outward sign of those perilous hours is the long roll of the great green waves. The ship rushes forward, yielding easily to

their influence, and her course is the swinging flight of a woodpigeon seeking her nest in a distant English woodland, on this glorious spring day. My thoughts fly forward on the wings of the dove. In a few hours I shall stand again beneath an English roof-tree. Oh! these leaden hours! To lighten them, I force my mind backward to the mighty country that has passed below the horizon. I have told you much of the United States, but on one personal topic my pen has never touched. To-day I write of it.

“I have tarried in a strange region. Few who enter it return, and they who do come back can never be quite the same again. It is a salt marsh that lies between the hard substantial world of work-a-day men and women and the dim seas of eternity which wander whither no man knoweth. On that barren waste nothing grows, neither flower nor weed. Purpose withers; endeavour fades; virtue is dead; vice cannot flourish. Nor hummock nor hollow

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relieves the dead level of the waste. Joy does not smile there; grief sheds no tear. The equality of its dreary misery is the most absolute possible for the mind to conceive. I name the region The Land Beyond Despair. Not only is hope dead, but even the memory of that last agony of hope, which men call despair.

“The listless figures who tread this stretch of wretchedness have once been men and women. They are now craven animals, without a scintilla of the divine. Golden dawn holds no promise for them; high noon is impotent to warm courage in their breast; never more will they feel the fear of the homeless at the red menace of approaching night. They have passed beyond human sentiment. Just beasts they are, insensate beasts! The rising tide of eternity bears them away one by one, but the rigour of death has less terror for them than the toil of life.

“These creatures are the jetsam of humanity. God help those whom fate flings among them!

Do you know how easy it is to starve? So long as a man can cling to hope—ay, to the faintest shadow of hope, courage is given to him and he finds the pangs of hunger lighter to bear than the bitterness of begging his bread. But let hope perish, courage fails and at once he belongs to a different order of beings. He has entered the Land Beyond Despair. Organized society is henceforth his dreaded foe. He avoids it, hiding out of sight except when hunger sends him abroad. But now his belly is quickly filled: a few vagrant crusts and a draught of public water satisfy his needs. Not by one single hour of work will he, of his own free will, re-purchase the right of manhood to its daily bread.

“Starvation in a crowded city is a terrible experience. The awful truth which so many men and women never realize throughout their lives, that food and raiment are not absolute necessities, when it is first brought home to one by actual experiment, strikes a paralyzing

blow. Others may eat and be satisfied; others may wear clothing and be warm; but hunger and cold must be the portion of you and yours. The gentle curves of beauty fade from the faces of the dear ones, and are replaced by the hard angles of hunger. The love-light in their eyes is killed by the wolf-glare of gnawing emptiness. Lower and lower a man sinks, fighting against a greater bitterness than death's, and feeling all the time that his struggles hourly grow weaker. Fortunately, I stood alone; but I mingled in that pitiful crowd with others on whom woman and child depended. Whose was the blame? Often, too often, the individual's; but I have heard this question asked: Why, if Christianity reserves a hell for the wicked after death, should it punish them with hell's torments while life is still in them?

“My pen is carried away on the tempestuous torrent of these sad memories. Do not let me stir too ready sympathy in your breast with every tale of distress. Remember, those

who truly merit help, are always the last to appeal for it. This fact renders the problem of providing true help for the outcasts of humanity a most difficult one. Nevertheless, it is a problem which will every year become more urgent, wherever there be big cities and Anglo-Saxon civilization.

“One night is branded indelibly on my memory. All day long I had tasted nothing. I was not in an uninhabited desert, but walking about a city whose busy marts were punctuated by churches. The wind lashed a chilling rain-storm through the streets, now deserted, for the hour was late. Soaked to the skin, cold, hungry, and miserable, I crouched in a doorway, and looking up beheld immediately opposite me the brilliance of a drinking saloon. Three young fellows were before the bar; already they had had too much to drink, but they ordered more. I could see the tapster place three tall glasses of lager beer on the counter; I could hear the money paid down

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for it, and I saw the glasses knocked over in drunken frolic, and the liquor run in wanton riot on the floor. More beer was called for, more beer was paid for, more beer was wasted. The money that those youngsters spent on liquor for which they had no thirst would have kept me in food and lodging several days. Why must I suffer from want, while others revelled in excess? It was cruel—cruel to behold, but far more cruel to ponder over, for the answer came back from myself that it was right that this inequality should be. Only in misery can all conditions be equal.

“Directly a man begins to rise in the world, he does actually rise; that is to say, he literally stands above certain of his fellows. It may be only by a hair’s breadth, but it suffices to urge him onward and upward. That sombre sojourn in the Land Beyond Despair taught me the folly of the theory that happiness can ever be found in a community of goods. When a race has been bred whose stature varies not by the

fraction of an inch, whose eyes and hair are of the same tint and hue, and whose frame and features are cast in an identical mould, then it may be possible to found a Utopia where all shall enjoy an equal share of the good things of this world, and where all shall endure an equal portion of evil. Then, and not till then.

“Before I left the Land Beyond Despair I learned another truth. Only a few meals separate man from the lower creation. An animal cannot commit suicide. The natural instinct of self-preservation is too powerful to be overcome except by the exertion of free will. I had dragged myself to the side of a swift flowing river. The steel-blue current rushed smoothly by, mouthing the bank, and whispering an easy escape from bodily pain and heart-weary disappointment. I longed to go. No idea of the wickedness of suicide entered my head, nor any thought of after-punishment. I had worked as long as I could

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obtain work; I was stricken with fever, but so long as I possessed money I had paid it out. Then neither strength nor money was left to me. I was starving and alone; the door of life seemed to be closing behind me. Why linger on the step?

“So much could I ask myself, but I could no more resolve to drown than I could have resolved to fly. The power was not in me; the very idea was repellent. Although convinced I was on the edge of the grave, yet until Death himself seized me I must live; I could not end my life. I shivered through the cold nights, I ached from the weariness of hunger, I hated to regard the past, I had no future to look forward to; but I was compelled to continue to draw breath, for by starvation I had forfeited the freedom of man's will. I had become merely an animal. I had often asked why, if so many people really do starve in London, suicides are not more frequent. In that hour I found the answer.

“For many nights I slept on the cold granite of a quiet market-place. The police allowed us miserables to gather there after it was dark, scattering us in the grey light of dawn. It was a hard mattress, yet so strange a thing is habit that after a little time I slept soundly on those flagstones; and the last night I passed in that city, when I had money in my pocket and could have engaged a room in an hotel, I went back to the market-place and of my own choice went to sleep, and slept soundly, on that hard grey granite bed.

“The terrible fact that confronts a man wherever he turns in this Land Beyond Despair is that the majority of its people are contented with their lot. They have no desire to return to the old life of toil. By whimper and fawning lie they can easily obtain the food they require, and often an extra coin or two, which is spent on the cheapest and most poisonous alcohol, their one idea of luxury. They have mastered every possible trick to

deceive the kind-hearted. Let them regard you as one of themselves and they will freely impart their unsavoury knowledge. It is horrible to listen to the stories of mean deception over which they gloat. Make it a rule never to give money in the streets to man, woman, or child who declare that they have been days without food. If it were true they would not ask for money: they would beg for bread. If any miserable being appeals at your door for food, never refuse it. Give a hunk of bread and meat or cheese. Very probably the creature does not deserve any help. That is not the point. Better to give bread to a hundred wastrels than to drive away empty from your door one really starving fellow-being. It were easy here on the open sea, with the clean salt wind in my face, to prescribe panaceas for this form of human helplessness and misery. I will not attempt it. For many of the creatures who throng the Land Beyond Despair the only possible

remedy is to ship them as soup-meat to the Cannibal Islands. So foul are they in body and soul that until they had been boiled down they could be of no possible use to themselves or to any one else.

“The tenderest shades of evening curtain the west. Another day is finished. I am one day nearer England. The sea has faded to a gentle grey, and the great waves have fallen asleep. Soon, soon I shall be at home again. Home! the oasis in this world's wilderness whose wells of sweet water should never run dry.

“One word more before I leave this Land Beyond Despair. The day may possibly come when you will have to take your part in trying to solve this fearful problem of human distress. I have spoken of these people as craven animals. That is what I believe many of them are, and what all will in time become who are forced to linger long in that abode of misery. But remember, however low they

sink they never lose the power of animals—the ability to multiply their kind. And they exercise it. Therefore I warn you not to consider this question as one which does not concern you or your class. If the population of wastrels and outcasts is permitted to increase unchecked year after year, sooner or later it will wreak terrible vengeance on the nation that has neglected it.”

It is nearly a quarter of a century
XIX. since I was in America. The country
and the people impressed me deeply;
there is so much that appeals to the imagination. I spent only a few days in New York, and was not sorry to leave it. I did not understand the city; its noise and hustle distracted me. Both seemed absolutely unnecessary, and only to serve as a mere-tricious advertisement of its business methods. Busy people are never in a hurry—not any more so on Manhattan Island than else-

where, and noise is not evidence of mental activity. Men hustle around there—to adopt their own phraseology—just to put up a bluff. Never in my life have I seen so many people with so much time on their hands as in New York. In every hotel there were scores of them, lounging in wicker-work chairs, spitting. I used to think that habit had been greatly exaggerated by English writers, but I soon found that only the bare truth had been stated. Expectoration appeared to me to be mainly a vague expression of personal independence. Everybody in America is feverishly anxious to prove, not that he is as good as his neighbour, but just a little bit better. So he spits as near his neighbour's boots as may be. If uneasiness or other symptoms of weakness be evidenced, next time he spits on them. The correct thing, I found, was to reciprocate. I shall always regard the dirty American habit of spitting as the inarticulate outpouring of an undisciplined mind.

The country is exquisitely beautiful, yet people in England who have never crossed the Atlantic usually regard the United States as a congeries of cities. This fallacy has its origin in America, where city life bulks so largely in the popular mind. As the train loitered one morning through the streets of Pittsburg, no fences on either side the line, the clanging bell on the engine sufficing to keep the track clear of children and pigs, who, I thought, ever spared a moment to think of Braddock's death-day in the tangled forest? Yet it was less than a century and a half ago, and Pittsburg then but a stockaded blockhouse in the heart of the wooded wild.

There are no more lovely landscapes in the world than in that wonderful country. The nation is waiting for a Constable or a Turner—some true son of the people with a genius fired by patriotism—to reveal to them the beauty of their own land. Meanwhile, they

deface and defile its natural glories with every form of cheap and blatant advertisement.

What the Thames is to England, the Mississippi will some day be to the United States. The romance of that giant river has yet to be written. I met its waters at several points along its mighty course, and each time they had for me the same intense fascination. When spring loosens the ice on its northern tributaries, you should embark on a river steamboat in Minnesota, and drop down from those Arctic regions until you scent the blossoms of the orange-groves of Louisiana. You voyage the same river all the time, and all the way on either bank toils the same nation.

Very small must be that man's intelligence who does not acquire some inkling of the vast problems underlying that fact, and of the immense racial issues waiting to be settled. On the Hindu Kush, below the Roof of the World, is the cradle of the Aryan race; but

the prairies of North America are the stud-farm of civilized humanity. I cannot help wondering what the American people will be two or three centuries hence. Will Jewish blood prove more potent than the Norse strain? These represent the two strongest breeds of the last two thousand years in so far as social progress is concerned. In America, for the first time the children of each people will exist under equal conditions. Class prejudices will vanish comparatively quickly, and then the struggle between the two races will begin in earnest; complicated, of course, by many side issues.

The fight between white and black is obvious. Years hence bloodshed may ensue, but the real battle is being fought now on the plains of peace, and the *casus belli* whether or not the negro can adapt himself to the somewhat rigorous conditions of Anglo-Saxon civilization. Then there will be a contest between city and country; but that probably

will be decided first in older countries. No nation can hope to survive which imprisons the choicest of its manhood all the year round in stifling streets and stinking alleys. Forest and field and the salty sea exercise an ennobling influence on human nature; whereas bricks, mortar and asphalte depress, degrade and dwarf it.

I came to have a genuine admiration for the American. All those whom I knew at all well, I found singularly intelligent, of a kindly disposition and modest. Directly the American grasped the fact that I did not intend to keep on shouting "God Save the Queen," he left off piping "Yankee Doodle Doo." He showed anxiety to acquire new facts, and imparted his knowledge readily and agreeably. The American in the making I detested. Speaking generally, he was a braggart and a liar; when not reviling the land of his birth, he was abusing the land of his adoption. But the very excess of his

faults acts as a warning to his children, and the best traits of American citizenship become apparent even in the first generation.

Most of my American friends were working-men. The men of that class are nearly always well-travelled and well-informed, even though they be literally unlettered heathen. They pass from city to city, from State to State, mixing with people of all nationalities, and working beside them. A stableman lodged in a boarding-house where I was for some weeks. He could neither read nor write, so on Sunday afternoons I would write letters home for him. It was a delight to talk to that man, but for one fault. He was full of curious knowledge, talked well on a variety of topics, but his profanity was horrible. The Sacred Name was always on his lips, and by a peculiar refinement of blasphemy the middle letter of the Divine Monogram had been added to it. He prefaced every second sentence with "Jesus H. Christ!"

I suggested a compact with him that while I wrote his letters he should not use that Name.

“Name!” he exclaimed in surprise. “What name?”

Then I discovered that that man was literally as absolute a heathen as any negro from the heart of Africa. God represented to him a vague Omnipotence, but all else was meaningless. What in my ears was foul blasphemy, on his lips was only a mellifluous ejaculation. Yet that heathen stableman was infinitely better educated than many English working-men. It is only fair to say he came from Arkansas, one of the most backward States; but that such profound ignorance and such wide knowledge of affairs should exist together in one man is one of the typical surprises of America.

In my time there was no discipline in the United States. Everybody played a mad game of Rugby football in which all rules

had been suspended. The ball was "material success." Now, the common denominator of all material success is, of course, cash—over there dollars; so it was a reckless rush for dollars. Who suffered in a game which was partly bloody fight, partly a mad ecstasy of excitement, did not appear to signify.

A good many rather foolish commentaries have been written on the worship of the almighty dollar. In its inception it was a sane and healthy worship. Even in those years of the early 'eighties it was difficult to realize all that a comparatively small handful of men and women had accomplished during the previous five decades. They had, it is true, been recruited every year by an army of heterogeneous immigrants, but the brains, the energy, and the leadership were mainly American.

On the western side of the Mississippi I remember a fair landscape of rolling cornfields, broken here and there by woods

that shaded sleepy creeks. Homesteads were plentiful, and townships frequent. "The valleys stand so thick with corn that they laugh and sing:" and among the corn reposed huge golden pumpkins. Fifty years previously—ay, and many years later—that vista was unproductive prairie, the hunting-ground of the Red Indian. Scalps of white men and women had been reaped on those wide acres, which when I saw them were fruitful farms. But Anglo-Saxon bonemeal is an excellent fertilizer.

In the old days dollars stood for each square mile won from the unploughed prairie, dollars stood for each farm carved from the virgin forest, for each mile of railroad flung across the wilderness, for each new bridge reared above the torrent, for each reef ripped from the hungry quartz, for each shaft sunk in the lonely mountain. Not one of those acts was achieved without plentiful sacrifice of life. The sacrifice

was freely offered; and they who had the luck gripped the dollars. They must not be grudging their reward. And if the prize fell now and again to the sutler because the fighting-man was too sorely spent to seize it: if the jackal feasted full because the lion perished in the fight that secured the prey, it does not alter the argument.

Woman fought beside man, taking fearful risks, and often dying terribly. Even in my time there were districts where a man carried his life in his hands, and where a woman's honour was at the mercy of the strongest bully. It was far more often so a generation previously. When the woman stayed behind on the eastern seaboard, she usually acted as her husband's business partner. Thus, the American woman occupies the same plane as the American man to-day; and the man, knowing she has never flinched to meet equal perils and to endure equal trials, willingly pays this tribute to her.

The American nation re-makes itself every ten years, so quickly does it absorb the over-plus of Europe. What is to be its future?

They say dollars are to constitute the main lines of social demarcation. I cannot believe it. Wealth, good looks, and good health are about equal personal advantages, for each enables a man to obtain greater enjoyment of life than he would otherwise be able to. But money *quâ* money never has been, and never will be, a world-power, any more than steel *quâ* steel.

Of what use to a monarch would be even the best-equipped armoury in the world, containing millions of big guns, of rifles and bayonets, of swords and lances—of wrought steel, that is to say—if he had not an army to use them—a disciplined army ready to obey his commands? And so with wealth. Before the man of millions can make his millions a world-power, he must have a disciplined army of men ready to use his gold

in accordance with his commands. This power must be employed ultimately for the gain of more gold. At once a rule of robbery is inaugurated which no free people will endure.

Americans sneer loudly at British class distinctions, but never has there been a people so childishly eager for every form of personal distinction. They entered the Civil War private citizens; they emerged—every man of them—military officers. Titles, dignities to which they have no right, ribbons, cockades, stamped metal discs—anything almost—suffice for the average American, so that he may distinguish himself from his neighbour.

I grope down the ebony avenue of the years to come. What do I see? A Man of Destiny emerges again from the shambles where they have been making all men equal. Blood has splashed his garments—the life-blood, this time, not of a callous aristocracy, but of a brutal plutocracy. It dyes them once again an im-

perial crimson. The Man of Destiny, despising the people, flatters them. He lays as tribute at their feet the conquest of Canada, and the subjugation of the West Indies and the republics of Central and South America. He is acclaimed Chief of the People. He crowns himself Emperor of All the Americas and creates his own nobility—Princes of Washington, Chicago, St. Louis, and of Cincinnati; Grand Dukes of Arizona, Alaska, and Alabama; Dukes of New York, of New Orleans, and of Portland-in-Oregon. The people are delighted. Emperor, Empire, Imperial dignities—the very gewgaws that in their heart they have longed for from their earliest infancy. *Ave Cæsar! Cæsar Americanus Imperator!*

My imagination runs away with me. But the conquest of that unconquered continent has bred a lust of power in the American breast, and a mad desire to attain the unattainable. The men with brains, energy, and courage have flocked to the cities, for Nature

is so far tamed she has no further fascination for them. They are matching their powers against other men. It is not money they desire primarily, but power. They will employ money to obtain power; and having power, they will utilize it to obtain more money and thus greater power. They will seek to stupefy the national conscience with stupendous munificence, and by the offer of gigantic gifts they will endeavour to buy from the community the right to oppress the individual.

Then let the people look to it!

CHAPTER VI.

THE Anglo-Saxon has an instinctive
.XX. genius for discipline. He likes to be
kept in order. Cheerful obedience to
the commands of accepted leaders has made
him the conqueror.

When an army is on the march men go in
front and men fall in behind. The general
and his staff ride at the head of the army;
the colonel rides at the head of the regiment.
Some regiments are mounted, others are afoot.
These distinctions are accepted by all ranks
as a matter of course; and class distinctions
in English civil life, broadly speaking, are
similarly accepted.

I have heard Englishmen in India—intelli-
gent men—jeer at England as being more
caste-ridden than Hindustan, and at the same

time I have read how Queen Victoria, Empress of India, has sat in a Highland cottage comforting a shepherd's widow, when death had called away the shepherd. The Brahmin woman would not, and could not, have acted so towards a Pariah woman under any circumstances. There is no caste in England, and class sits lightly on us. We do not exalt it into a fetish. When the breach is to be stormed, if the captain falter the sergeant takes his place; if both hesitate, then the best man to the front! Nowhere in this twentieth century will you find better discipline and less class prejudice than in England.

People talk of the London policeman in a tone of awe because he can clear a crossing by raising his hand. There is nothing strange in that, but there is an infinite amount of wonderment in that mob of jostling vehicles that he so instantly checks. Go any afternoon during the season to Piccadilly Circus and notice the blocks of traffic. Every class is

represented, from a royal carriage to the coster's barrow. A policeman holds up his hand. Whether duke or drayman be in a hurry, or whether fussy M.P. or my lady in her landau fume furiously, it is of no consequence—an old woman wants to cross the road. For the moment all class distinctions vanish; all are equal and accept the equality. A London crossing is the finest illustration of our national sense of discipline.

The only sure foundation of discipline is loyalty. Loyalty is of the quality of mercy—it blesses him who gives and him who takes. The loyal man is loyal equally to those he serves and to those who serve him. It is one of the higher virtues, for it entails the practice of charity and sympathy, the acceptance of equality in so far as the universal facts of life are concerned, and the recognition that men are not machines. Creçy was won because the knights dismounted and stood shoulder to shoulder with the archers. In every famous

exploit of British arms there has been no distinction of rank when the fighting or the starvation or the forced marches have begun: the essential difference between a good regiment and a rotten regiment on active service lies in the relationship between officers and men. It is the same in civil life wherever there is struggle and stress.

Discipline, worthy of the name, can only exist where there is loyalty; and when loyalty exists, discipline will withstand the severest strain. It will be a bad day for England, should loyalty between master and man weaken: it will signify the relaxation of those bonds of discipline of which the outward signs are class distinctions. Whatever else a man may be, he must be loyal—loyal to his country, loyal to those he works for, loyal to those who work for him, and loyal to himself.

The curse of our modern civilization arises not from class distinctions, but from those sectional divisions which the growth of cities

compel. A man's residence in town or city is almost entirely decided by his income. When at the Last Trump London's cemeteries give up their dead, they will fall in, square by square, crescent by crescent, street by street, slum by slum—from Dives who had £10,000 a year and more to Lazarus who found it hard to earn a bare tenpence a day. The disciple who shall martial London's millions before the Judgment Seat will be not St. Peter, but St. Matthew the tax-collector.


The evil of this cash-created cleavage lies in the fact that large sections of the population, drawn from almost every class, grow up utterly out of sympathy with other sections, either above or below them, in Schedule D. They know nothing of their trials, their troubles, or their virtues; they only wax jealous over their superficial advantages, or are scornful of their obvious faults.

The village has always been democratic at heart. Cottager may doff the hat or drop a

curtsey to squire and parson, but in the cottage the conduct of both will be criticized freely, and on occasions the opinions then formed plainly formulated. Tell Tom the ploughboy that he is as good a man as the farmer's son and he will cordially agree with you; but go on to say that the gipsy lad is as good as he, and instantly he will retort: "Not by a darn sight!" In the fine spirit of democracy, he declares all men to be his equals—except his inferiors.

All classes are brought into close contact in the village. They come unconsciously to recognize that virtue is a flower of many forms and varied hues; they behold with their own eyes that the great life-throes, whether of joy or of sorrow, are common to all humanity. But this cannot happen in city or suburb, where, almost of necessity, a child only meets other children living under almost identical conditions. Even in a village, the better-to-do villagers will not allow their children to enter

certain cottages for fear of physical or moral contamination; but in the city this reason creates a well-nigh insuperable barrier between large sections of the nation—a barrier which they who know best the poorer classes, gladly would see overthrown. Daily for a period of some weeks I walked through one of the poor districts of London just at the hour when the schools were assembling. The children were many of them dirty and unkempt; nor could one wonder at it amid those squalid environments. But then again I saw children, clean in face and dress, clothes neatly mended, boots nicely blackened, hair carefully brushed. It was the same every day. These children came from the same courts and from the same tenements as the others. Consider the strength of character of that mother who will not allow herself to be overcome by the dirt and depression that surround such a home. Were she to fail, no one could blame her. Courage and undaunted endurance under adverse circum-



stances form one of the best traits in the national character—they are, indeed, the strongest fibre of our racial being—and nowhere are these qualities better nurtured to-day than in the nobler homes of the working-classes.

Let it always be remembered that class distinctions are far more numerous and complex in the lower and middle ranks. When a man occupies a well-defined position, these distinctions resolve themselves mainly into the question of identical interests.

England expects every man to do his duty and every class to do their duty; so long as the duty is done, England does not interfere with man or class, but only when it is wilfully neglected and warnings go unheeded. The headsman's axe flashed that message in Whitehall two hundred and fifty years ago. Charles II. learned the truth of it, and, laughing gaily, he placed coronets on the brows of his Rahabs, and made his bastards the legis-

lators of the people. He revenged his father's death by turning the House of Lords into what it still remains—the biggest practical joke in history. A man's conduct may be so despicable that his company is avoided by honourable men of all ranks, but because an ancestress happened to be an harlot he remains an Imperial legislator! Nobility is deemed the very essence of that assembly of aristocrats, yet as often as not the assembly has been entered up the steps of ignobility. Every sin denounced in the Decalogue has added at least one representative to those Estates. Even to-day My Lords Spiritual come in their surplices hot-foot from the pulpits, where they have been preaching down Mammon-worship, to welcome my new Lord Temporal, who by the most successful practice of that same worship, has found himself able to sustain hereditary honours.

The House of Lords, considered in the abstract, is the most laughable public institu-

tion in existence. But the common sense of the people, ignoring its superficial absurdities, has made it part of the well-ordered life of the nation. It accords well with the plan of national discipline, for it enables high civil promotion to be conferred on individuals—on such men who have worked their way upwards, often by sheer ability, nearly always by force of character, though sometimes by the mere possession of wealth. Wherefore the House of Lords will endure.

Wealth has always been recognized by the nation as a good reason for civil promotion. As a rule the man who makes a fortune in his lifetime does so by the creation of a new industry, or by following closely in the footsteps of the pioneers of original enterprises. The constant development of commercial life through all its branches is vital if the parent tree is to continue healthy. Therefore it is wise for the nation to offer every encouragement to this development.

When a boy I used to watch from our dining-room window old women picking up dead sticks in a lime-tree avenue with which to boil their kettle. To-day I constantly see old women—of both sexes—picking up dead sticks in order to boil kettle or pot. Nowhere is this habit more common than beneath that stately avenue of the First and Second Estates which stretches away to the dim horizon of our history. The poor old things clutch the rotten rubbish to their withered paps, in which the milk of human kindness has long since dried up, and they shake their hoary noddles and mutter and moan over the terrible state of the trees, though in truth they are perfectly healthy. The dead wood that falls from them is only evidence that new life is forward, casting out the old, and that the sap rises with the waxing year as strongly as ever.

The House of Lords encourages the creation of new wealth, and it provides an adequate check against the abuse of it. He who amasses

millions in his lifetime may easily bring himself to believe that he is above the ordinary rules of life just as he has risen above the common conventionalities of the class to which he originally belonged. Evil designs of wealthy men breed like rabbits, and the poor man's wheat would often suffer badly if they were allowed to go unchecked. So we wisely bolt the gold bunny with the Kohinur scut into the rabbit-net of the House of Lords; we put him in a coroneted hutch, and at once he becomes a harmless ornament of the British Constitution.

The common sense of the Anglo-Saxon is admirable. We all think like Shakespeare, but the pity of it! none of us write like him. Yet that play-acting boy from the country only wrote to cater for the frivolous of his age. We pride ourselves that at heart we are Puritans and highly moral, but imagine what our literature would be like, had it only been prepared for the pulpit.

Turn to the Courts of Justice and look at the folly of law. If a sworn witness tells a deliberate lie, easy to be disproved, he commits perjury; but if he utters falsehoods difficult to be refuted because veneered with probability, then it is only a triumph of cross-examination. In those courts, Truth is daily broken in pieces; in the scramble each lawyer gets hold of a few fragments, and, with them and plenty of plausible plaster and a dab or two of lies, he manufactures a mosaic which he calls the Truth. The mosaic that appeals most quickly to the jury obtains the verdict. But it is not Verity, only Verisimilitude. Speaking once to a native of India on the blessings of British rule, I pointed out that justice in that country was now purged of corruption. He admitted it, adding: "But what difference does it make to us? In the old days the man who could give the biggest bribe to the judge won his case; to-day the man who can pay the biggest fee to the lawyer wins.

It is all the same, then and now: victory to the longest purse!"

That is a cynical view of the case. To the nation it makes all the difference whether it strives after justice and will not be turned from its purpose because the ideal cannot be attained. Anglo-Saxon common sense accepts the world as it is, not as it might be or even as it would have it to be. It works as well as it can with the materials ready to hand, although it knows well that if only better could be obtained, finer results would be achieved. Britain blunders forward, keeping her ideals to herself, not bothering about obvious absurdities, but content to utilize everything that has even a streak of good in it for the benefit of herself and humanity.

The suburban type of mind necessarily spreads every year in England. XXI. With all its good qualities and abilities, it has the terrible defect that it is

unable to think sanely on any problem outside the ken of that section of the people whose incomes never fall below £300 or rise above £3000 a year. It comes to regard money as the only thing worth living for. Early training renders this error almost inevitable, and not often does travel correct it.

Brightness of life and freedom of limb are the most precious privileges of childhood. In suburb and city the degree to which either is enjoyed must depend upon the income of the parent. A child sees that his friends have a larger garden and enjoy more amusements than himself. When he asks why it is so, he is at once told because the parents have more money. If the garden has to be given up and a smaller house taken, it is because they have lost their money; should the reverse happily occur, it is because more money has been made. Money—money—money! Every fact of suburban life hammers its importance into youthful minds. No wonder there are so many Englishmen in

England with the false idea that money is the only thing in life really worth living for.

Life has bestowed on me no privilege which I value more highly than the chance whereby I became a member of a planting community in India. Those planter-friends were men of character, and their conduct ever since has caused me to feel shame if I wince beneath a blow, however heavy it may fall. They went to India in their youth to grow coffee and to make their fortunes. They took out with them health and strength, intellect, money, and high hopes. They spared none of these things, but Nature overcame them. Defeat came from unexpected quarters. A new blight broke out, devastating hundreds of acres. After several propitious seasons, there followed a succession of years when heaven seemed determined either to drown their prosperity under a flood of waters or to wither it in a furnace of drought. Though vanquished, they fought on. The fault was not in them, nor could any one falsely declare it to

be so. Nature was too strong for them; but though she broke their hopes, their fortunes, and their health, she was powerless against their courage, nor could she cloud the brave serenity of their characters.

One there was who, having capital, had gone out to India in early youth, hoping in a few years to return to England with a sufficient fortune to settle down quietly in an English manor-house. His whole heart was bound up in England. For the love he had to her, he served seven years so that they seemed unto him but a few days. And yet another seven years. Other years followed. But each found him farther and farther from England; the prospect of returning home grew more and more remote. Yet bitterness was given no shelter in his heart; only in quiet hours among intimates would a chance word reveal the agony of exile, the intensity of his sorrow. God took pity on him. His health broke. Friends made up a purse and sent him to England. He landed in England,

and they carried him to a hospital. Thus the home-coming came at last—that happy hour for which he had worked, he had hoped, he had prayed. He was back in England. His exile was finished. And that night—the first night he had slept on English soil for thirty years—he died.

To others even this home-coming was denied. They lived on year after year on estates which had been their own but which had passed to others. Where they had reigned, they served. Yet always there was the same cheerful greeting, the same open hospitality, and the same generous welcome to the man who journeyed that way in the days of harsh poverty, as in the old golden days when they had kept open house.

It was good to sit and talk with these men who had watched their hopes perish, who had beheld their dreams fade into nothingness, who had thrown the dice with Life and lost, and now only waited to sup alone with Death. They never repined; they talked as brightly

and happily as if fortune had been most kind to them. They would not yield a foot to fate. The grave for them was narrower than the seas. They chatted merrily about old comrades, told stories about former friends, and one could not tell by the tone of their voice whether these friends were dead or merely had returned to England. Those planters taught me to read aright that old riddle of the strong man—"Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." They are laid to rest in an alien land; wild marigolds and heathen weeds flourish above their desolate graves.

Commercially they were total failures. They lost all their money. The bright tinsel of life and the loud-sounding brass of what the world ordinarily calls success had been cast into the melting-pot of adversity, and all that was left to them was a cross—a little cross of bronze. They wore it so proudly and cheerfully that you knew the words "For Valour" were

inscribed upon it. They faced the foe serenely until the fatal blow fell, knowing there was no escape from their lonely post, and they died clean-hearted Englishmen, who had scorned despair and would not mar their manhood by seeking an hour's oblivion in uncomely practices.


These men, I tell you, were money-failures. So were the three hundred who fell at Thermopylæ. But they are all heroes. Men whom calamity ennobles are shining lights, whose example leads the people onward up the hill. Such characters are made of gold—no! not of gold; that is too soft a metal. They are of the finest steel—metal that has glowed white hot in the enthusiasms of youth, and has been plunged hissing a dozen times in the cold waters of disappointment; metal that has been laid on the anvil of affliction and beaten out by the hammer of adversity. But the hammer leaps from the blow with clear, clinking, sterling ring. The steel has been well tried;

it glitters in the sunshine and gleams in the shadow; nothing can turn its edge. These money-failures make a man proud of his race.

I have always felt that those old planter-comrades of mine had by the nobility of their character laid a duty upon me. The graves of those who have passed away are scattered among the thousand hills of the Wynaad, Coorg, and Mysore in Southern India. To-day I fulfil my duty; I give to my countrymen that message which their lives spoke forth—

“Go tell the ‘English,’ thou that passest by,
That here obedient to their laws we lie.”

But there is no need to cross the seas to discover this sterling bravery of the Anglo-Saxon character. Here in London, at the threshold of the Empire, we may behold illustrations of it, if only we have eyes to see. London is exile to many a countryman. I never notice plants trained over windows or cages of birds hanging against a wall



in slumland's drab Siberia without thinking of the human heart that beats in that narrow tenement and its unutterable longing for green fields and the song of birds at dawn. These exiles have travelled to the city believing its streets to be paved with gold, and thinking to return quickly to the cottage garden of childhood with gold-lined pockets. But they are limed as the goldfinch is limed; they are snared as the skylark is snared. Never again can they escape to the country except for a few rare hours in the year. Yet still they have their courage; they will not be cheerless, for they are Englishmen. They make a little countryside about their windows; and fools passing by, pity the caged birds, forgetting the caged heart for whom those birds make melody.

London in its entirety is as unknown
XXII. a country as Central Africa. Mount
an omnibus in Kensington and drive to
Whitechapel. In two hours you pass through



at least six different cities, contiguous but in all essentials separate. There is Kensington, where live professional people earning from £600 to £3000 a year. They have their special shops. In the daytime the men are scarce and the women usually walk, though now and again a private carriage is to be seen. Then you enter Mayfair, the wealthiest, the most luxurious, and the best-groomed city in the world. At Hyde Park Corner there is a constant coming and going between the parts round Belgrave Square and the hinterland of Park Lane. All down Piccadilly men and women, horses and liveries denote good breeding, and a right appreciation and employment of wealth. Even where brains are few manners abound; and if now and again morals be absent, neither lady's-maid, valet nor stableman can be reproached for indifferent work.

Afterwards you drop down to a perfectly different city—a more work-a-day place—entering it near the Charing Cross Post-

office. It is a town where men slave to amuse their fellow-men, but where there are ample evidences that if they do not succeed they are content to amuse themselves cheaply and coarsely. To appreciate this town properly you should traverse it by gaslight; in the daytime it is tawdry, something like a painted mummer beneath the open sky.

And now we arrive at Bohemia, crossing its borders at Temple Bar. If time permits, descend and enter the courtyards of the Temple, and submit to the overpowering influence of London's greatest and most historic contrast. Not twenty paces behind you are the roar and rush of modern life; yet here is ancient peace, a quiet resting-place where it has pleased Time to fold his wings for a while. In Jerusalem the Pharisee went up into the Temple. In London the Pharisee continues to go up into the Temple, but he does not stay there to pray; he travels a little beyond it—to Fleet Street, where the newspaper offices


are. For the newspaper columns are to-day the broad phylacteries of the Pharisee. I do not speak of the men who work in those offices, and who as a class are the hardest brain-toilers in London, but of those who write letters to the editors and allow themselves to be interviewed in those columns. They are the Pharisees of this generation; their tone, their posture, the very subject-matter of their utterances bears the unmistakable family likeness.

Now climb Ludgate Hill, and beneath the shadow of St. Paul's plunge into the middle of the busiest hive of human industry on the face of the globe. The ant is a sluggard compared to the City man, and the working bee a drone. There is no noise, no scrambling, no hustling, but every one intent on his own work walks rapidly to and fro. The omnibus moves slowly, giving ample time to decipher the addresses on the numerous great packing-cases. They are to be despatched to all parts

of the earth, and you become alive to the fact that here is the nerve-centre of the world.

Return to the City on a Sunday, when its streets are deserted, and the chance passer-by can well imagine himself to be Macaulay's New Zealander; then you may understand, as you have never understood before, the meaning of the phrase "a day of rest."

And so on to Whitechapel, a squalid city, a town of iron toil. The family that can afford a slatternly girl-servant at a shilling a week is rising in the social scale. There are grey square miles hereabouts where not an English face is seen, and not a word of the English tongue spoken. These acreages equal in extent Continental towns of considerable importance, and they are Continental towns with this exception, that only the very meanest and the worst are congregated here. Should ever revolution let loose their hundreds of thousands upon Mayfair, the old question will be



asked with new and terrible emphasis: "Who are these people, where do they come from?"


Personally, I enjoy a really thick
XXIII. London fog. It imparts an air of
mystery to the most familiar street.
Once I expressed myself so to a friend.
"Yes," he replied; "it is like sudden death in
a family; it alters the commonest views, and
changes the appearance of everything one has
grown most accustomed to."

A fog delights me because of the contrast
it creates between out-of-doors and indoors.
Even when there is only a thin veil of bewildering
mist, it is pleasant to turn into the warm
gloom of one's room. The fire is there with
a welcome, and the faces in the fire, and
the vistas in the red-hot coals, and the voices
in the spurting flames. The intimacy of the
hearth is one of London's most cheerful ex-
periences, for it needs a cheerless street to
bring it fully home to a man. I have gone

leaping down the years with the leaping flames, and I cannot tell you all the burning adventures I have been through with the aid of a shovelful of coal. Victory has waved for me her banners of crimson and orange and buttercup-yellow. Amid the grey ashes I have buried many foolish hopes.



London is a City Beautiful. In summer be abroad at sunrise, and see the exquisite charm of this great city, so constantly reviled for its smoke and dirt and fog. The air is sparkingly clear, unless there be a heat haze, which hides the views as a bridal veil conceals the blushes of a bride. Hyde Park and the Green Park are plots of rural England. If only London in summer were Paris or Vienna, Londoners would rave about its beauty.

The rolling hills of Piccadilly when the streets are empty of an early morning are pleasant to look upon. You gaze with surprise at the declivity of St. James' Street, and would not be surprised to behold Gadarene



swine running violently down St. Martin's Lane into Whitehall and being choked in the pond in St. James' Park, so steep is the place. Pall Mall, and the ridge of the Strand with its lower terrace, the Embankment, are almost the only level streets in London west of the Mansion House. The view from the bridge over the ornamental water in St. James' Park is magnificent. The towers of Westminster Abbey are always impressive, but they should be seen in the keen moonlight of a frosty winter night, when they stand above the building, ghostly sentinels, pale as alabaster. The Abbey itself has the massiveness, the strength and the repose of a lion couchant.

Not without reason did our forefathers decide on summer for the London season. London is never more beautiful than at that time of the year. There are nights when night is unknown. Before the hues of sunset have painted the sky above Kensington the company have assembled for dinner, and the soft tints



of dawn beyond the City have faded an hour or two ere they have dispersed from the dance. True, such nights are rare, but never a one of them is forgotten. In middle age and down the long slope of later years these memories re-create the London of our youth. For the happy children of fortune London is a City Beautiful.

CHAPTER VII.

LONDON is a City Terrible. Its con-
XXIV. trasts appal. How far may it be from
heaven to hell? Do they measure the
distance in miles, in days' journeyings, or in
fractions of eternity? How far may it be from
hell to heaven? Only the distance of time
that lies between two of the morning and ten
of the morning at the heart of this Christian
city of London.

"Watchman, what of the night?"

"Black as hell; but business is brisk and
the market-place thronged."

"Watchman, what of the market? What
sell they there? Are the prices high?"

"Come, see. The devil has lit the lamps.
Gas flares: passions burn. They are **selling**
human flesh and blood; and the price of it is

always cheap in London. They are buying woman's purity, and the strength of manhood. The price of these goods is high, but they give long credit in London, for in the end the bill is paid in full and with interest."

"Watchman, what of the night?"

"Dawn breaks. I pray you, good gentlemen, go home and change your evening clothes. This is Sunday morning; the church bells will soon be ringing. To your kennels, ye sluts!"

It is Sunday morning. The sun shines brightly down Piccadilly. The bells are chiming for Divine service. Father, mother, and children—watch them walking sedately to church along the clean-washed pavement, in their Sunday best, prayer-book and hymn-book in hand, a threepenny-bit in their pockets and self-complacency in their hearts. O happy Christian England, are not thy ways the very paths to heaven!


They will send missionaries to far lands

to convert the sensual heathen. Their brains will tingle at the thought of Eastern slave-markets. By legislation they will seek to stop the distant traffic, and by legislation they will virtually protect the villains who batten on this same traffic at their threshold. Their road to church is along the pavement of hell. Not a dozen hours separate those lost souls of the night from these good souls, so secure of their salvation. All that is needed to enjoy the reputation of a God-fearing Englishman are broadcloth and a narrow mind. Thank heaven! both are still staples of British industry.

Yet it is very foolish to rail against this hypocrisy. To arraign a nation for the common sins of humanity is merely to convict oneself of culpable ignorance. This hideous hiring-out of human beings is horrible; but the same traffic goes on in countries where boys and girls are married at the earliest possible age, and where polygamy is sanctioned. Why

this sacrifice of souls to the Moloch of animal lust should continue all over the world irrespective of social customs and religious creeds no one can understand, but it is so. All we can do is to limit it, by keeping it within due bounds, and never to destroy hope for the victims.

Again, it is so easy to grow sarcastic over foreign missions while there is so much sin and sorrow at home. Many good people in these islands honestly believe that the missionary to foreign parts is due solely to the Divine command to go into all the world and preach the gospel, not seeing that this is only a pretext—a splendid pretext for many shining acts of supreme self-sacrifice—but still a pretext. England is the mother of the missionary, as she is the mother of the merchant and the soldier. The same blood flows through their veins, and the same Viking unrest stirs within their breasts. The soldier seeks new battle-fields, the merchant new



markets, and the missionary new martyrdom. That is the only difference between the three.

Stay-at-homes sneer loudly at this conjunction of bibles, bayonets, and cheap brandy. Nevertheless thereby we have won an Empire. Where the merchant has been turned back the soldier has gone forward, and when both have failed the missionary has succeeded. We have fought our battles on a wide front, and we are still fighting the battles of peace and progress along the same broad lines.

Standing on the Embankment near XXV. Cleopatra's Needle a little after midnight, with the tide just after flood and a full moon, a man looks on one of the wonder-sights of the world. The great river comes to meet him, under the mystery of the night; it lifts to him a bosom in which the secrets of the centuries are hidden. As the hurrying waters pass beyond the blackness of the bridges, the moon smites a silver path

across them. The same white radiance illumined the same black tide when wolves bayed along the wooded banks, before ever man had laved feet or brow in this triumphant water-way of Empire. Railway signals on Hungerford bridge—yellow and green and red—and the lamps along the wall cast opalescent shadows on the shifting surface, forming jewelled avenues here and there. On the farther side, barges moored together create alleys of purple gloom. The gloom spreads to the wharves and climbs the tall warehouse walls. Beyond that bank of darkness are toil and sleep. Northward are luxury and laughter. Lamps gleam in the windows of the big hotels—red-shaded lamps that recall the heavy eye-lids of venal beauty. In the distance, a-top Big Ben's tower, flares the signal that Parliament is talking.

How little has the cry of the populace changed with the centuries. "Panem et

circenses!" rang through the streets of the world's capital nearly two thousand years ago. "Panem et sermones!" sounds to-day above the hubbub of earth's mightiest city.

"Give us bread! give us bread!" So did the people cry in imperial Rome; so they cry in imperial London. And with the bread a little pleasure—pleasure without thought or care for the pain of others. From the rich man's table crumbs are cast to the mob. Then the masters of imperial Rome gave games where poor wretches died horribly for the delight of the clamorous ones. Now, to secure popular favour, the masters of imperial London add speeches, interminable speeches, and fling first this class and then that class to the lions.

The mystery of a river at night is to me overpowering. The murmurings of its waters are murmurs of the voices that have spoken on its banks since it flowed first from the parent fount. Where the moonbeams meet

the shadows above its waves, I can almost discern the spirits of all mortal men and women it has ever carried to rest. If the shadows would but shift, if a different ray would diffuse the moonlight, I believe I could see and converse with those whose presence I feel around me.

“Waters of Thames, ghosts that dwell thereon! tell me this: Good red blood that so often has dyed for you a Tyrian mantle; ships going out on the ebb freighted with merchandise or with fighting men; ships home with the flood, plunder-laden or hearses of heroes; barges of merriment floating to Whitehall; barges of moaning borne through Traitors’ Gate; coal barges toiling against the stream with sweating and curses; gentle waters of affluents that make music in distant vales; salt waves rushing in from the roaring ocean; bitter tricklings of Tyburn’s rivulet; foul outpourings of vicious sewers; the new corpse carried by each new

tide; scent of new-mown hay from sunny meadows: these things, all these things have they been, are they, but chance incidents in mockery of man? Or has never a peal of laughter echoed along your shores, has never an agony been witnessed by you, waters of Thames, from the hour when the painted Briton, smitten to the heart by Roman blade, fell on Westminster's marshes to the last splash of a broken woman from Waterloo Bridge, which has not been without good purpose? Ghosts, speak to me! You must know! Is the fabric of this city, reared on joy and pain, on merriment and torment? Steaming blood, streaming tears, re-echoing laughter, resounding pomp, unending suffering—are they the bricks and mortar with which an Empire and an Empire's capital must be built?"

I believe so.

"Buy a bunch of violets, kind gentleman!"

This utterance from a miserable woman, one of

the kind that haunt the Embankment through the night-hours, broke my reverie.

It was hard to trace the lineaments of womanhood in the squalid features of that poor drab. Chance meetings with wretched creatures of this kind, be they women or men, utterly broken and degraded, lead one to the edge of a very pitiful abyss. What tragedy flung them in the pit?

We grieve when the body dies. Our tears fall freely when familiar features sink into grey clay, which smiles shall never brighten, and where frowns shall never throw a furrow. When corruption claims the physical charms, our lamentation is most poignant. But should a soul die and enter corruption, what then? We stand afar off and shrug our shoulders; or perhaps we utter a few commonplace regrets, and change the subject quickly to pleasant topics.

You may say that a soul can never die. It may live gloriously, or it may be punished

terribly; but it cannot taste corruption. And so according to these tenets, the souls of these miserables must go down to hell, and their sin being scarlet burn until they be one scarlet scar. Surely corruption were more merciful.

There comes to every man, at least
XXVI. once in his life, a midnight of despair
when he is lost in a wilderness of woe.
The whole world reels from him, and neither in
heaven nor on earth can he perceive the faintest
glimmer of hope. One winter some years ago
I passed through such a period in London.

Wandering down its horrible streets when
the last streak of sunset red had faded from
the soot-clouds, I was overwhelmed by misery.
The glare of the gin-shops lies on the pallid
cheek of London's false night like rouge on the
face of a haggard harlot. It mimics beauty
that it never possessed and can never possess.
Nevertheless this hideous mockery of brightness
and happiness, the hall-mark and the hell-mark

of vice, does appeal to ignorance and wretchedness, and also to youth. Wretchedness sinks deeper; ignorance becomes besotted, and youth is poisoned at the fount of joy. For to many poor people the public-house is almost the only thing they can call joy that enters within the reach of their scanty pence.

“Curse God and die!” One night these words rang through and through my brain, and from the empty cavern in my breast came back the echo: “Curse Nothing and return to nothingness.”

In the mire of a lump of dirt writhed an amœba. The dirt whirled through space, thickened and hardened while the fires of the firmament played around and within it. And it became Earth. The amœba grew fat, grew a tail, left the mud, entered clean water. It was a fish. The fish forsook the water, but adhering to its tail, developed into an anthropoid. The ape seeing a heaven above it climbed the trees; but discovering how low the tree-tops really

were, it came back to earth and climbed the mountains. Flint and granite cut its tail, and cut its paws, fore and hind. Being economical in the matter of pain, it dropped the tail and for the future stood erect. So the ape became Man.

Man having reached the summits of earth, and finding himself only a hand's breadth or so nearer heaven than in the days of his monkey-hood determined to fly. He could not fly, and he entertained familiar contempt for creatures that used wings. Often he had stolen their eggs and feasted on their young. To turn into a bird obviously would be retrograde. Wherefore he devised a plan whereby when he ceased to be man, he still remained man, but with a larger and finer pair of wings than ever graced fowl that laid eggs on earth. So Man became an Angel.

It is a very ancient plan and admirably adjusted from an individual point of view, but hitherto it has not worked well. In the nine

prenatal months, every stage from amœba to man is clearly shown. Through the years of life that follow, humanity gives no more visible proof of its capacity to ascend to the sky than on the day it descended from the boughs. Heaven is as far distant as ever, and Man as remote from his celestial ideal as when a glutinous globule slumbering in the slime.

Thus I argued to myself, questioning, Did God make the earth? Did God make man? From the mud they came and mud they remain; hard brick beneath the suns of summer and of prosperity; sloughs of misery when the rains of winter fall or the tears of sorrow.

“In a little while,” I said to myself, “I shall die, and my corpse be pitched on one of the many bone-heaps that girdle London. Till all of me that might stink in suburban nostrils has rotted into clay, I shall be permitted to rest in the shallow pit, dug by a fellow-man for half a day’s wage and a pot of beer. Then my bones shall be scattered. They shall breed briars, and

the tissue of my heart shall nurture nettles. That will be the end of me, the absolute final end. So ended the amœba, the fish, the ape!"

When despair seizes on the soul, the same question constantly recurs: Did God make Man? Did an Infinite Wisdom fashion his form and mould his mind? Before you answer, regard the men and women lurking in the dark corners of this mother-city of Empire, the mightiest manifestation on earth of man's intellect, industry and power.

Once upon a time on a tropical hillside, to pass an idle quarter of an hour, I played at God. With a stick in my hand I sat beside an ant-hill. The ants ran in and out, busy at their multitudinous tasks. They carried the burdens of labour; they brought home the spoils of victory; they bore away their dead for burial; they multiplied corridors where their young should be born; but they took no notice of me.

"O wicked ants!" I cried; "not for a moment do you pause to utter prayer or praise

to the omnipotence that looks down upon you. In an instant he can scatter your homes and destroy your multitudes."

Though I were angry yet I would be merciful. I lightly ran my stick zigzag across their busy paths, maiming or killing a dozen here, a score there, and lesser numbers elsewhere. For the moment the sight was pitiable, but in very brief time no evidence of my wrath was left. The ants had removed their dead and returned to their tasks. I bent lower over the tiny creatures so that my body shut out the sunlight, and the trivial channels of their industry became as cheerless as the streets of London on a winter's afternoon.

"Wicked ants," I thundered, "behold, I am the god that made you!"

They did not deny it; they continued at their work.

Once more I spoke. "Your god is almighty, and his vengeance is terrible."

I raised my heel to crush their homes, but

paused—and burst into a peal of laughter. To play successfully at God, a man must lack all sense of humour.

Yet in London day by day one beholds or hears of incidents no less pitiable than my brutality on that tropical hillside. Men and women are killed or maimed at their daily work without any apparent reason. They say these things are the acts of God. A heavy van comes clattering down a greasy street. A child slips, falls beneath the wheel, and is carried to the hospital injured for life, if life be spared to it. No one is to blame. It is an accident—an act of God!

During one night, a long night, when I could not sleep, thoughts rushed to my brain and overpowered me. I paced my room. I was in pain. I flung open the window, and the cold air told me it was the death hour of the night. I know the hour so well in the open field. On English countryside or in tropical jungle the phenomenon is the same—a terrible

chill, a ghostly quiet, during the few minutes when yesterday is dead and the dawn of to-day has not yet quivered on the horizon. The stillness is intense. Neither bird nor beast nor leaf stirs. Nature stands mute, with bowed head and hands outstretched in silent benediction.

But on the city the benediction may not fall. There is no peace there, though the breath of death be in the air. A footstep clattered down the street; I knew the man, a printer, returning from his work. In the house across the way a light had been shining for some minutes; a carman lived there who was just about to begin the day. Oh! this perpetual farce of "Box and Cox," this human tragedy upon which no curtain drops. There is never silence in the city; there is never rest. The stone of Sisyphus is always moving up the hill with painful toil or rolling down the steep with agonizing ease. Rest—the very word in London's overcrowded thoroughfares

has a mocking sound. There is no rest here or hereafter. In the tomb the worm crawls.

In those dark hours of pain and despondency I would seek for comfort and could find none. The godly man affirms the date of the Deluge or the Creation of the World, and the man of science asserts the age of star or stalactite; but who shall tell me when the living soul first entered this vile body? Was a sacred germ implanted in the protoplasm? Did the Divine breath blow upon the simian among the tree-tops? Was the supreme moment of everlasting glory reserved for man? Had man then advanced beyond the animal state of the Australasian aboriginal? had he attained a higher civilization than the naked denizens of the convict isles of Andaman? Or is the soul an infection conveyed by raiment? Answer me these questions, ye shepherds of the people!

“Curse God and die!” I could not get the words out of my head that night. Is the man

indeed a fool that says in his heart, "There is no God"? It were reasonable for a king to advance this doctrine, and it were wise that the king's ministers and those in authority should teach it. If there be no God, look around at the misery and suffering of humanity; and conceive what an unspeakable monster or an ineffably feeble worm man in power must be.

What is religion? I have never
XXVII. heard the word defined. Is religion
the bonds which bind a man to the
example of the Christ, to the service of his
fellow-man, to the furtherance of happiness in
this world with little care or thought of any
world to come? Or is religion the plain man's
vade mecum showing him where and when
and how he may despoil his neighbour with-
out shocking conventionality, or being taken
to the police-court? Or, again, is religion just
a guide to the shortest cut to heaven?

And what is the heaven we are told to prepare for—that metallic city of bilious hue? Go to church every Sunday and put your sixpences and threepenny-bits in the alms-chest, so, having rid yourself of small silver on earth, God may give you a solid golden mansion in heaven! Go to church every Sunday and all the week insult and bully husband or wife; make your home a hell for children and servants! Slander, lie, spit black malice on all that come near—but go to church every Sunday, “make your humble confession to Almighty God meekly kneeling upon your knees,” and go home and through the week bully, lie and slander just as before!

Little wonder that the lives of so many are so full of selfishness, when selfishness is the keynote of so much preaching and teaching. Be good children in this world, be kind (after your own fashion), love your neighbour as yourself (of course not accepting the words too literally); and a day will come when

your Father shall call you home to heaven. And this heavenly home, what is it? Just a celestial Rosherville, the place to spend a happy eternity! All the uncomfortable things that marred the former life will have been far removed. I have even heard it said from a pulpit there is presumptive evidence that being among the elect you with Lazarus may behold Dives and his fellows writhing in hell. What perfect bliss unending! A degenerate Cæsar at his gladiatorial games could never have imagined a supream height of joy!

Whether I sparkle in heaven or smoulder in hell is to me to-day a matter of indifference. Conscious of the vast misery, suffering, and injustice that exists on the whole surface of this globe, whether it be inhabited by civilized or uncivilized races, by Christian peoples or by peoples Christians call heathen, every fibre of my being cries aloud for a fuller life hereafter and for a Judgment Seat of unerring justice.

I have described heaven as an amber calm,

a Sargasso sea, where spiritual energy rests awhile and is renewed. So at one time of my life I imagined it to be. Be it as it may, believe me that if heaven in any way resembles the vision of the Apocalypse, the crown that shall be placed upon the brow of man's immortality, will be forged from the pure gold of simple acts of self-sacrifice, done when he was mortal. The jewels, that shall glitter for him in heaven, will be the tears of gladness that he made to glisten in the eyes of earthly sorrow. The language of those angelic songs, which shall welcome the Living Soul as it soars heavenward, will tell of the humble thankfulness and gratitude no words on earth can express, which the Dead Man, lying stark upon his bed, caused to spring from the hearts of the widows, the fatherless, and the distressed when the breath of life was in him. These things I do believe, and in this belief I struggle upwards.


CHAPTER VIII.

As to a kind nurse, I go back to the XXVIII. country after weary months in the city. Is it merely because I was born and brought up in rural parts that a gentle peace steals over me as I wander again in the fields and through the gardens?

I go to church in the country, and I leave strengthened and refreshed. In London it is never so. A London church distracts me. There seems something in the atmosphere that destroys reverence. The fault may be in me, but unconsciously I feel that the majority of the congregation are only there because they think it is the right thing to do. They bow the knee to the Baal of conventional respectability. They ask nothing from God. The

burnt sacrifice of oxen—at thirteence half-penny a pound—is waiting for them at home. In church they may pick up a new idea about the cut of a garment, but the thought of acquiring new inspiration that shall carry them through the week's work hardly seems to enter head or heart. In many West End and suburban churches the music or the preaching is openly the attraction, and is advertised as an attraction in half-a-dozen discreet ways. There is too much cleaning the outside of the cup and of the platter. A sincere sermon or a minority of devout worshippers does not alter this fact. Only in Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral, do I ever feel in London that I approach the Mercy Seat.

But in a country church it is different. There generation after generation have been christened, have been wedded, and have mourned behind the bier. Those holy moments have created an atmosphere which



man is powerless to dispel. Villagers for ten generations and more sleep round the sacred building. The summer breeze blows in through the open doors across their graves. Within the walls the sleepers when in life have stood with God, and now outside in death they rest with Him.

Nature encompasses the House of Holiness. The many sounds of country life come in through window and door, and form an antiphon to the Psalms of David, the shepherd-boy. The Saviour drew His teaching from the garden, the hedgerow, the lake, and the corn-field. The Liturgy is culled from the world outside. To sit in church and hear perhaps the distant sea or the lowing of kine or the calling of birds, or to see sheep grazing in the fields, and flowers growing in God's acre, is a true aid and help to prayer, and leads the mind upward to the Creator of all things, great and small.

In Australia, I once visited the Jenolan



Caves in New South Wales, where is a great cavern called the Devil's Coach-house. It should be named God's Cathedral. Entering it from the lower level you see above you a square opening which frames a distant hillside. It might be an East Window. Another high opening suggests an organ-loft; all around are water-worn boulders. These rocks might have been worn smooth by the tears of centuries of sorrow and by the knees of countless generations of repentant sinners. Never have I felt myself so near to God as in that Australian cavern. I should like to have heard its dim recesses echoing to Luther's hymn, sung by a mighty congregation.

When a little boy, I would think the great pleasure in being grown up lay in the fact that a man never wanted to cry. Since I have grown up I have found that while I remained a child in most things, I had lost the child's happy capacity of easing grief by tears. Some day man may arrive at his full stature, but not

in this world: here he is always more or less an infant. Yet once or twice since I arrived at manhood I have wept happily.

A native village straggles up a mountain pass among the coffee plantations of Southern India. Beyond the village, a little way from the road and above it among the coffee, is a small English church. One cannot see it from the road. Sunday is market-day, and several hundred Hindu labourers come to the village from the plantations in order to purchase their weekly supplies. The noise and the stench are awful. I had ridden in from my coffee estate, eight miles away, and passed through the village. I was tired and weak, for I had been down with malaria; I had still a good many miles to travel, and I was feeling on that Sunday morning very homesick. The deafening din and the rank smells of the bazaar added to my misery. The village was left behind, and I rode on slowly, depressed and disconsolate. Suddenly above me rang out the

well-known Anglican chant of the "Te Deum," sung by healthy English voices:


"We praise Thee, O God ; we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.

"All the earth doth worship Thee ; the Father everlasting."

I slipped off my pony. I uncovered my head. Memories of childhood crowded round me. My lips did not move, but I uttered every versicle in my heart. Beneath a wild fig-tree, on that Eastern ghat, I sang the "Te Deum" as I had never sung it in my life before; and as the old words and the old tune passed through me, I sobbed my heart out on my pony's mane. So a child sobs away its sorrow at its mother's knee. At last the chant ended and there was silence. I knew that in the church they were reading a passage from the New Testament, words of hope and comfort that had fallen from the lips of One to whom the scene I had just left behind me must have

been very familiar. I dried my eyes; I mounted my pony, and rode on up the mountain pass a stronger, happier and better man.


I know a castle upon a hill which is
XXIX. always a source of deep delight to
me. It is a symbol of strength and
hope. I pace its battlements, and before me no
small section of three English counties is un-
rolled. A wide valley stretches immediately
below. It was to guard its passage that the
first stones of those old walls were laid in
ancient days, probably long before the Con-
queror landed. Beyond that valley are hills,
hills, hills; and their slopes melt so softly
into the far horizon that oftentimes you may
not say where earth ends and heaven begins.
Villages cluster around the churches across the
valley, so that all who are born or die within
those cottages enter or leave the world beneath
the shadow of God's House. That shadow
has never fallen idly on any child of man.



It sheds an influence none may escape. Many an humble offering—in former generations often a free day's work, gladly given by a man to whom time was his only means—has gone to the building of those houses of prayer. The sacred stones raised by the fathers give back a blessing on the children, even though some of them never enter within the walls.


Across the lawn is the house. Its kindly walls are grey with age, and draped with creepers, honeysuckle and tea-roses. One Gloire de Dijon has its roots in the foundation of the wall, but the castle is so strong that it can nurture this rose-tree without sign of weakness or decay. The castle is so very strong, so patient, and wears such a kindly reverend air of sympathy, that it speaks to everything in one's character that savours of nobility, courage and strength. I have said it is a symbol of hope, unfailing hope. Think of the scenes those walls have witnessed! In their youth, Norman wassail and riot of John's

retainers; in middle age they bore themselves bravely when the cannon of King and of Cromwell thundered from batteries in the park. You may still see where those batteries were raised and where many an Englishman must have fallen by the guns. They are covered now by a velvet pall of turf. We dwell happily in England and are proud of the freedom which is the birthright of the humblest Briton. Should we have been proud of England, had we been peasants at the mercy of a Norman baron? What joy was there in England, when brother was at the throat of brother and the whole land was given up to murderous hate? Still it was England, the same England, our England! These stones have looked upon it all, have endured through all, and now they stand, old and grey, the glory of the county. You say there are sermons in stones. I tell you that some stones have a greater power! They live, they breathe, they comfort, they bless.



A castle crowns a crag by the wild North Sea. Its weather-beaten keep tells a stern and savage story of unflinching loyalty. I know nothing more pathetic than the broken columns of its ancient chapel, rising from the turf in the inner ward. As an old warrior's face will frighten a child whom he lifts gently upon his knee, so this Northumbrian castle almost terrifies you at first, so fierce is its aspect, even in its peaceful old age. But lo! when you come to know it well, it inspires with the same spirit of strong endurance; it teaches the same lesson that it is cowardly to yield until the very death-blow falls.

My thoughts dwell on other houses, show-places of their neighbourhood, mansions standing amid gardens, in wide parks. Their lichened walls bear enduring testimony to the honourable records of the families, who have dwelt within them through several centuries. The builders of those glorious courtyards and delightful corridors laughed in the very face




of time, so leisurely did their work proceed. What the father began, the son would finish; and the structure slowly grew from generation to generation. The old families of England, with all their faults, held that their first duty to God was their duty to their neighbour. By special grace they had been born what they were; and the kindness and consideration which they so often showed towards those who occupied inferior or less fortunate positions, were with them simple acts of gratitude to the Creator. They gloried in the age of their family-tree, and their glory found expression in the shelter and shade which they cast over those around them. It was as though they had learned a lesson from the old oaks in their parks. This sense of responsibility was doubtless the outcome of feudal instincts, purified to a large extent by practical Christianity.

Vegetarians are singularly unim-
XXX. aginative people. They give as one
reason for their diet, that they desire
not to cause pain. Go through a rose-garden
after a hail-storm, and a more pitiful sight you
could not conceive. Every blossom is dashed to
pieces, most of the buds are cut off as if with a
knife, and the trees themselves broken. If ever
there is a scene of pain, it is a storm-shattered
rosary; certainly a covert-side after a battue
when the guns have shot straight could not
appear, even to a sentimentalist, a sadder sight.
Is human sympathy with the lower creation
merely the matter of a backbone? Think
of the tens of thousands of lepidoptera and
pulmonate molluscs that must perish for
vegetarians to banquet. Surely the slug and
the caterpillar have an equal right to life with
the hogget and the steer! Death must be as
disagreeable to each. When a hare screams or
a pheasant trails a broken wing, the reason why
we are so volubly distressed is because those

acts are horribly suggestive of the pain we should feel under similar circumstances.


I often think that flowers and plants suffer quite as much as animals, only we are not conscious of it. The suffering of the vegetable world is outside human scope, beyond human ken. It would, of course, be ridiculous to compare the nervous system of a cab-horse with that of a cabbage, and to argue that to overdrive the one is as cruel as to underboil the other; but it does not need much imagination to comprehend the exquisite agony of the early cauliflower, cut off from its favoured site in the warm angle of the red-brick wall just at the moment when it is unfolding its tender petals to the first rays of spring.

Some day, when our finer feelings are refined, we may perceive the shudder that runs down a row of peas when the gardener enters the kitchen-garden with a basket on his arm; we may behold the old apple-tree flustering its leaves to conceal its raw green offspring, at the




horrid sight of the bullet head of a grinning boy above the orchard hedge. Which sounds the more brutal—to apply a ruthless knife to the tender asparagus shoot that lifts its head from the salt earth to meet April's sunbeams, and which, if spared, would later in the year break into feathery foam, sea-green and gemmed with coral, or to rape from its rock the bearded oyster that opens lazily its flinty lips to suck in wayward sewage?

I walk in a park and rest on the root of a great oak. As a sapling it must have witnessed Plantagenet kings hunting the black deer in these royal glades—black deer whose tribe still prospers. The parent oak must surely have seen the human sacrifice of Druids. It is in the early part of the year and Nature basks in the sunlight. Wood-pigeons flap lazily from the firs to the spinnies, soaring noisily in the calm air and descending with open wings to the nest-tree. Rabbits speckle the grass with grey; and an old cock-pheasant breakfasts at an ant-




hill. Here are cattle, and, in the meadows beyond the plantations, sheep. Wherever I look, I see animals happy in the sunlight, who are simply there that they may suffer violent death for the pleasure or the use of man. Once I had a capital view of that rarest country sight—an unhunted full-grown fox in daylight. It seems cruel that all these beasts should be at the harsh mercy of man, but were it otherwise, consider the countless numbers of God's creatures that would never enjoy life at all. If life is worth having, a price must be paid for it.

On everything that breathes or blossoms life bestows happiness, but for everything that breathes or blossoms there is pain. Oh! this inscrutable mystery of pain, this seeming cruelty that tortures man the worst. The beast may escape to the thicket and struggle with his agony in solitude; but man must bear it in the open. He may not hide his torment, be it of body or of soul, from the careless gaze. In times of pain there comes an intense craving




for loneliness; for utter loneliness is in the heart. Then man is as a lonely wrestler in the arena; he fights with beasts at Ephesus. The dust blinds and chokes him, the sun beats fiercely on his bare head. He fights on. His struggles delight the crowd. They stare at him, they glare at him—eyes, eyes, eyes! He slips: Hell has him by the throat. The eyes, the cruel eyes pack hungrily around and above him. Among the shadows he sees lips curl, and words form: “It was his own fault.” Still he wrestles on. For the moment he wins. The eyes recede wearily; they see no pleasure but in failure. His strength begins to fail: he must soon fall. There are the eyes around, above him, save for a yard or two of God’s sky. Eyes, cruel eyes, laughing eyes, eyes of scorn, mocking eyes, eyes that have never looked forth from a heart of pity. He is lonely and in pain; in his loneliness he cries aloud. But he may not yield; he wrestles on. At last the end comes. He falls. And then at last the eyes



disappear. They turn to another's struggle. Oh! those eyes, those un pitying eyes! that make pain so hard for man to bear.

I rest in an avenue of lime-trees. The giant trees, iron bound to protect them against the gales, form a cathedral nave; but man-wrought tracery was never so delicate as the canopy of boughs above my head. Sunshine flickers through the foliage; the bees are on the flowers. I look across a formal garden; its flower-beds stain with bright colours my chancel floor. The billows of an old clipped yew-hedge form the altar-rails; the distant hills are the High Altar. It is the very House of God. I uncover my head, and in my heart kneel humbly. Once again I hear the vast organ-melody of some great anthem, chanted by all things living, by earth, by air, by sky. The shrill alarum of a blackbird, frightened by cuckoo or hawk, is the only jarring note; and presently the scream of a rabbit seized by a **stoat**. These cries of pain find an echo in my




breast. Oh! the dark mystery of pain! Why must it always be everywhere? I know at least it is right to fight on to the last, never to yield, and with that small knowledge I have to rest content. Gradually my thoughts fell into these simple syllables; to the low music of the bees I wrote this hymn of pain:—

“For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.”

O GOD, who sendest pain to cure
The foolish pride of feeble man,
Give me good courage to endure,
And strength to comprehend Thy plan;
That from the anguish of my heart
I learn to choose the better part.

The Crown of Thorns all crowns transcends
In glorious magnificence;
The kingdom of the Cross extends
Beyond all worldly dominance:
On torment, bravely borne, bestow
The golden peace of Thy Son's woe.



Pain is the tribute we must pay

For pleasure on this pleasant earth;
Sharp thorn of rose, cold snow in May,

The bitter myrrh of fragrant mirth:
We enter through a gate of pain;
By the same gate we leave again.

The coward seeks to flee the blow

That falls in battle's cruel hour:
I pray I never sink the brow,

Or lose stout faith in Higher Power:
Stand Thou close by me in the strife;
My wounds hurt sore; I fight for life—

For life on earth and after death.

In solitude pain tempts the most.
But I will praise, while I draw breath,
The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Grant me, Eternal Trinity,
High courage through death's agony.

Amen.



CHAPTER IX.

IF God intended man to be happy, XXXI. is it right for him to pursue happiness? Ay! let him pursue the rainbow and dig for the pot of gold where it touches earth. In this practical age many seek first for the golden pot, and then look to see a rainbow issue from it. They clutch it eagerly, but find happiness is not there. They might as well clasp a jar of honey in a place of stinging flies, and think to enjoy its sweetness in comfort. There is delight in the toil that leads to wealth; there is joy in success whether or not it be reckoned in coin; and there is pleasure in the wise exercise of power which riches undoubtedly bestow, though the extent of it is often foolishly exaggerated. But the colour of happiness is

not yellow—neither the yellow of gold nor the yellow of jealousy, which the possession of gold so often excites in the breasts of others.

And happiness is not like cheese. A man may not step into the store of the Great Provider, chink a few small virtues on the counter, and demand an hour or a day or a year of happiness. Happiness is neither in wealth nor in virtue; nor in the lack of wealth nor in the lack of virtue. Happiness is in the atmosphere. It is the sunshine of the soul; it falls on all equally. A ray will even penetrate to the poor wretch who lies bound in a dungeon of squalor and vice.

There are persons whose favourite occupation is to contrast their merits with the faults of their neighbours. They throw up their hands in surprise that such a one, lacking their peculiar virtues, can be happy. The poor will imagine the very rich cannot be happy; and the millionaire will pity in his heart the joyless existence of the penniless.

But these are private delusions. In the life of every mortal there is happiness—more or less happiness. All that it truly concerns a man to discover is that state of happiness which will strengthen him, body and soul, to withstand the inevitable shocks of sorrow, disappointment and suffering.

Sunshine on the heights of the mountains gives renewed health and vigour; sunshine in the valley-bottoms and on the marshlands breeds fevers and miasms. Happiness is the sunshine of the soul; very similar conditions apply to it. There is no one word in the English language to denote the happiness of the mountain-height, so one must fall back on epithets. And epithets are always unsatisfactory.

When a man talks of “real” happiness, I instinctively think of those cheap restaurants where they advertise “real” turtle soup. Of course the soup is not real turtle, and usually the real happiness is a very cheap substitute

for the true thing as I understand it. True happiness is a better phrase, though even that smacks somewhat of Chadband. The happiness of the mountain-height is closely allied with work—work the consoler, work the finest tonic in the world, work the only harmless opiate for a soul in agony.

Once upon a time I projected a novel which was to be called *The Suicide*. A man still in early manhood had awakened to the emptiness of existence; he saw that the only fruit of his labours were Dead Sea apples. Why should he continue to draw breath when no good thing came of it? He left his house with the sullen determination to kill himself, for he would play no further part in the dreary farce of Life. He started to walk to a cliff at the base of which waves surged among jagged rocks; for he thought bitterly to himself, that if he threw himself among them, there was little chance of his body being found to provide a text for hypocrites.

On the way to his suicide he met a little child, crying sadly, who had lost its way. Half an hour longer in the world could make no difference to him, so taking the child by the hand he tried to guide it home. It was no easy task, for its directions, prattled lispingly amid sobs, were vague and difficult to understand. But its tears soon gave way to smiles, and smiles yielded to laughter; and when an hour later the home was found, there was no happier being than that lost child. The man left the cottage, having forgotten for the moment his purpose. With slower steps he resumed his walk, for new thoughts came upon him. As he stood on the cliff he saw in imagination his own body flung from the waves to the rocks, and from the rocks to the waves—such pitiful flotsam!

“This flesh of me has done no harm that it should be brutally broken. Why should this bodily mechanism, so easily disrupted, be ruined by myself when I am not even certain

that the Self within me, which I wish to kill, can be killed? During the time I was looking for that child's home my Self was dormant, for I thought only of the child and how to make it glad. My purpose shall not change. In this hour I commit suicide. But my body shall live; my Self shall die. Henceforth I work only for others; my happiness shall be but the reflection of their happiness. I taste no joy, unless it be the lees of a cup of joy which I have prepared for miserables and from which they have drunk gratefully."

So he went about his work seeking to kill Self by submerging his life in the miseries around him. But presently he felt disappointment if those whom he had helped did not smile on him; and he grew unhappy when his efforts failed to lighten another's sorrow. Self was not dead; for it still demanded rewards and still knew the pain of failure. From that time onward he worked harder than

before; but he allowed himself no pleasure in thanks, he declined to be cast down if success did not ensue where he had striven well. Directly he had fulfilled a task he compelled himself to take no further interest in it; he resolutely faced the steep hill of unrequited labour. Hard and long was the struggle, but at last it was over. The suicide was finished. And from the grave where Self was buried rose a gentle Spirit, whose halo was the sunshine of the mountain height.

That old proverb "Virtue is its
XXXII. own reward" ought to read "Virtue
knows no reward." Directly a man
moulds his conduct in the hope of obtaining
a reward, the virtue goes out of it. The act
may be most meritorious; the prize only the
commendation of some one whose good
opinion is well worth having, nevertheless
virtue can know no reward whatsoever. The
truth is a hard one to explain except by

analogy. Fighting is the bravest work in the world.

“What! trying to kill your fellow-man!” you exclaim.

“Not so; but doing your duty before the open face of death, and knowing all the time that if you make a mistake it is no use saying, ‘I am so sorry.’ You must instantly suffer for it, either with your life or in your reputation.”

It is the evening of a great battle; the victory has been complete. All ranks have behaved like heroes. Where is the colonel? On his way to the general’s tent to demand ribbons or stars? And the subalterns? Are they pursuing the colonel to file claims for immediate promotion? That lion-hearted non-commissioned officer who braved death a dozen times this day, is he busy before the sun sets, canvassing his company for their votes, should the cross for valour be offered to the bravest man in the regiment? The mere suggestion that British soldiers could stoop to

such conduct, hurts one. Yet stars and ribbons, promotion and medals are the rewards of victory. But no man fights for them; no man expects instantly to receive them. When the battle is over, there are the dead and the wounded to be tended. The army that fights without sense of duty but for the sake of spoil is an utterly worthless army; and there is little if any more worth in the man who fights the battles of life in the same false spirit.

I am told constantly that to achieve a purpose in the hope of obtaining a reward is very human; nevertheless I question the accuracy of the adjective. The poodle that balances a lump of sugar on his nose does it in the hope of reward; the ass that in the circus-ring will allow no one to mount its back except the clown, so behaves for the same reason. If this trait of expecting sugar or carrots directly we have done something to be proud of is indeed human; then it belongs to that side

of human nature which man possesses in common with other animals. Yet one must not rate the trait too low, since indubitably it has inspired many noble acts.

“The peerage or Westminster Abbey!” exclaimed Nelson before the battle of the Nile; but the *Victory* sails into the fighting line at Trafalgar flying the signal: “England expects every man will do his duty.” The hope of reward is not so much human as due to human training. Children are encouraged to be good, or to learn their lessons quickly, for the sake of prizes. The principle is wrong. Duty wisely taught and rightly understood is a more potent, a more enduring, and a more noble inspiration. And in the years that come after, the disappointments and heartaches that will be saved to those who have been thus rightly and wisely trained, will be many.

Do not imagine that because virtue knows no reward, no reward will be forthcoming. It will come most surely, but in an unexpected

hour and in a manner never thought of. Before now I have gone out of my way to help a man. Trouble has overtaken me. I have turned to that man for assistance, knowing he could render it. He has turned his back on me. Then I had thought I had indeed the right to rail at human nature. But in almost the self-same hour some man, on whom I had no claim whatsoever, has held out the hand of a comrade, and in the end has given me truer sympathy and greater help than ever I expected from the ingrate. I had no right to sneer at human nature. I could but find fault with my own weakness for expecting a reward when I had only tried to do my duty.


“Not once or twice in our rough island story,
The path of duty has been the way to glory.”

The path of duty is always, and always must be, the way to glory in the roughest life story of any of us. It is not only the way to glory, it is the road to happiness.

How far am I I? To what degree XXXIII. is this Self my individual Self?

This question must often trouble a man during quiet hours. A flock of sheep graze in a field, and you cannot distinguish one mutton from the other. Do we appear as similar to each other in the eyes of an Archangel? Has man no real individuality outside his own imagination?

Paintings and photographs prove that our form and features are a heritage. They are individual only to the slight extent of infinitesimal mutations in the moulding of face and figure. The Self that is within us—is that also a heritage? A man caught in the wild surges of primitive passion, on the point of committing a vile sin, may be checked by a prayer uttered by his grandmother at the altar rail a few weeks before his father was born. In that hour an impulse for good was created which descends to succeeding generations. But does this law of heritage



apply to reason and to every action, good or bad ?

Then arises the humiliating thought that even if man's power for good and evil be transmitted through his children, it raises him hardly higher than a racehorse or than Smithfield's fat cattle. If he be childless, the inheritance lapses.

We do not educate our Self sufficiently. Selfishness, unselfishness, self-sacrifice, self-indulgence, and the rest are phrases—convenient labels for certain mental states. Altruism is undiluted cant. Whatever we do, we do to please our Self. Every act of a man's life, it matters not whether it be good or bad, is entirely controlled by a man's Self. His conduct depends upon his ideas of what constitute personal pleasure and personal pain. No one would dream of calling a man unselfish who, though fond of port, refused it because he knew it would give him gout on the morrow.

• It is no more unselfish to refrain from doing

an unkind act, though it may momentarily afford pleasure, because you are conscious that afterwards there will be sorrow for the pain caused to another.

It has always seemed to me an omission to be deplored, that the Church Catechism does not contain any definition of a man's duty towards his Self. It would naturally follow on the Duty towards God and towards his neighbour, and would impart a clearer and more clean-cut distinctness to the highest form of conduct. It would also kill that fallacy so common in children's minds at the age when they first learn their Catechism, that God is a terror, their neighbour a nuisance, and they themselves can never do anything to please themselves, unless it be naughty. It should run something like this:—

“ My duty towards my Self is to believe in my Self, to be true to my Self, and to make my Self the right judge of my thoughts and my actions: Not to be

puffed up by the praise of my neighbours, nor to be cast down by his blame: To endeavour to advance daily in moral and material welfare: To learn joy in my duty towards God, to find strength in service towards my neighbour, and to so order my life that I find happiness in this world, and also continue in the hope that happiness will ensue to me in the world to come."

Life is hard. I envy those narrow-minded people who honestly believe that there is always a right way and a wrong way, and no other way. One would think that at every turn of the road a guide-post stood, to point the path to perdition and the way to eternal bliss. Is it so? I myself am trapped by paradox: I am sniggled by contradiction. A man resists temptation; humiliation ensues, and in that moment he falls an easy victim to a mean motive, and commits a petty sin which destroys joy in another's life. Again, he does wilfully that which is

wrong, but, through repentance, obtains strength to attain to a height not reached before.

The pass of life is one and the same road, whether it rises or falls. It is not a straight up and down declivity from heaven to hell, but a road of many gradients, for even on the ascent it often drops among the little hills before the long climb begins in earnest. Also it may rise steeply, and a man may deceive himself that he is mounting higher just before the awful descent begins, down—down—down to the pit. The road must be trodden by all of us. Let us do it cheerfully, training ourselves to mark all those little signs which denote whether we are really reaching higher altitudes.

It is the duty of each one of us to mount higher every day of our lives. We must help our neighbour; but at the same time we cannot allow him to drag us down, because he will make no effort to help himself. He who

spoke the parable of the Good Samaritan, spoke also the parable of Dives and Lazarus. He was familiar with the sight of those professional beggars still so common in the East—poor wretches with horrible sores, who squat by the gates of the rich and at the entrance to every temple.

“And who is my neighbour?” When the lawyer put the question, there must have been a score of those whining wastrels in view. If the Founder of Christianity had intended to sanction that form of bastard Socialism which passes currency to-day, He would have pointed to them and said: “Behold your neighbours! go and share your riches and your happiness with them.” Not so. He answered: “A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves. . . . And *by chance* there came down a certain priest that way. . . . And likewise a Levite. . . . But a certain Samaritan, *as he journeyed*, came where he was. . . .”

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From first to last the whole event, so to speak, was an accident—an unrehearsed incident of ordinary life. None of those men went out of their way, least of all the Samaritan. The oil and the wine he carried with him; he set the wounded man upon his own beast, and took him not home but to an inn; nor did he delay his journey on his account, for on the morrow he departed.


The whole teaching of the parable of the Good Samaritan is that a man is not expected to alter his daily life for the sake of his neighbour, nor even to make any undue self-sacrifice on his behalf. If in the ordinary course of life he comes across one who has fallen among thieves, it is his duty to show compassion on him, to give him of his wine and of his oil, to walk a mile or two when he would otherwise have ridden, and to leave him in good care even though it involve personal expense. But he is still the Good Samaritan, though he does not otherwise

change the ordinary course of his life. Human sympathy is like a hansom cab; it rarely travels outside a four-mile radius, but if it goes beyond, either it loses its way or makes exorbitant demands. It is not natural, nay! it is unhealthy to work up sympathy for those to whom to be of true help is beyond our power or our reach. "Thy neighbour" is the man fallen among thieves, whom thou comest across as thou journeyest, and on whom thou must instinctively have compassion.

Deplorable nonsense has been uttered by many worthy men and women on that last sentence in the Duty towards thy neighbour: "And to do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call me." God made man in His own image, not in the image of a mollusc. He never intended him to remain in the same narrow state of life in which he was born, if he had the strength and courage to rise higher. I say truly that the state of life to which it has pleased, and

shall please, God to call all of us, is that state where to-day we are at least a yard higher than where we stood yesterday. We must toil upward all the time. Yet this sentence is made a text against every kind of discontent. It may be wicked to be discontented; but what is wicked discontent? Complete contentment with oneself, though never an effort has been made to advance upward; and discontent only with one's neighbour who by industry and intellect has risen higher. Every healthy man should be discontented—discontented with himself whenever he feels he is making no upward progress. Towards his neighbour he should feel content, not minding whether he rise above him, provided he has not allowed himself to be surpassed through his own laziness or sloth. But towards himself he should always entertain more or less discontent.

Selfism is that quality whereby a man learns instinctively to do his duty towards God by finding strength and happiness in



service towards his neighbour. To obtain this strength and happiness he must please himself first of all, but at the same time so subordinate his personal interests that they do not conflict with the well-being of the general community. And this also is Socialism.


Socialism and Selfism are the two strong pinions upon which humanity shall soar heavenwards. They must beat the air with equal force, for cripple the one never so slightly and the other is unable to fulfil its true work. They are opposing energies. If they do not act in unison, they must counter-act each other.

Through Socialism will come a just and equitable distribution of the good things of this world; not of coarse and temporary material advantages, but of the higher pleasures such as peace, health, happiness and wisdom. Through Selfism man will develop his individual nature, and thereby accustom himself to a truer view of mortal and immortal

existence. He will at last realize that the most abiding happiness is the reflection of happiness.

I foresee no sudden Utopia. Suffering, misery and distress will not appreciably diminish for generations. Once I used to say that the pendulum of Nature ever swings true—from joy to sorrow, from laughter to tears. With each new pang, there comes a new pleasure; and no ecstasy of body or soul has been created which did not carry with it its countervailing agony. In other words, no matter how civilization advances, the balance of weal and woe never varies.

But a vital principle has already been won. The lives which we accept as ensamples, and for which we employ the epithets of good, happy, virtuous, noble, etc., are those which have been spent in the service of their fellow-creatures. Therefore in our inmost hearts we confess that man's highest purpose in this world is to increase human happiness and to lessen human misery.



CHAPTER X.

THERE was a headland in India
XXXIV. where late in the afternoon I often
lingered—a headland, jutting into
a western sea, washed by troubled waters,
glorious beneath the rays of the setting sun.
I have described the scene. Twenty miles
to the east rose the mountains. They had
appeared far, far away in the morning; but in
the fine light of evening they approached.
They wore a look of calmness, intense and
sorrowful. I would think it were the sad
serenity of immortality.

I have stood in imagination more than once
upon that headland, and watched the familiar
ways of earth fading in the twilight; the
doctors have told me to be prepared for the

worst. My brain has been clear. I have written farewell letters; I have spoken last words to a friend. Yet I have recovered. The thoughts expressed here have come to me under those circumstances. They rose in my mind as I lay on what I believed was to be my deathbed. Troubled waters surged then about me, illumined by a strange glory, the warning of the coming night.

"The sun is sinking fast,
The daylight dies."

Darkness would soon fall. Where should I stand then? In the golden dawn of a brighter day? Beneath the utter blackness of annihilation? Or amid the pale gloom of purgatory, on this side the tremulous glow of heaven's distant splendour, and there the angry flicker of hell's tormenting flames? I would not fear the future. I determined to learn my lessons from the past, so that even in the shadow of night I would live the present that it should

have nothing wherewith to reproach me whatever lay beyond.

“Fight on, fight on! though the vessel is all but a wreck.” Yes! we must fight on; though the struggle be hard when a man is wounded, stricken and lonely. And wounded, stricken and lonely every son of Adam, born of woman, must be when that last fight begins. Where then are the joys of earth? What are the facts of life? Health—it has gone from him. Wealth—did he have it—could only grin hideously. Home—half a dozen oaken boards and a few yards of linen! Friendship! What is the meaning of the word? The smiles of woman, the merry shouting of children, the warmth of summer sun, the exhilaration of winter’s first frost—I laughed in derision when they spoke to me of those delights. But a few decades ago, before my mother conceived me, they had no meaning. “To-morrow,” I said, “they may again be meaningless.” I would ask, “Are you positive these things are real

and living; are you certain they are not mere echoes and shadows?"

Is it the final test of reality that a thing be tangible? Can only thoughts and sentiments live that send a thrill of pain or joy through these transient tissues? The very bed on which in those sick hours I rested might at any moment have had no existence. The answer would come back to me without words:—"It is you who cease to exist."

Do I die?

Sincerity, happiness, work—the trinity of true manhood—it shall be my motto to the end. But in the last days of weakness it is fined down to a unity. Can a man be insincere when he sees the little black barque steered straight towards him, and knows that at any moment he may be called to step on board and be ferried—whither? The very word "work" raises a smile as a dying man, among his pillows, glances at the thin hand that has hardly strength to guide pencil


across paper. But happiness! Ay! there is happiness on the bed of sickness; there is happiness at the brink of the grave.

Do I die?

Out of that sense of happiness I have answered: "No; life begins in earnest when I have sloughed this torturing skin of corruption—a shirt of Nessus that eats into the strongest soul."

Death has no physical terrors for me. I have never been frightened at his advent. Three times I have looked straight into his eyes. Once I besought him to take me away. He came quite close, but passed by. The second time I cowered, but not at him. As his shadow fell near me, there arose an accusing spirit—call it conscience or what you will—which scourged my soul with a loaded knout.

"What have you done to justify your life? It is finished—a blank record. Never a chance again; never a new opportunity. All



thrown away: all wasted. Not a smile have you, through the sacrifice of self, brought to the face of misery; not a tear have you, to your own discomfort, dried in the eyes of sorrow. You have lived for yourself. Life has been just a jest."

Slash! slash! slash! The sentences hurt horribly. These meditations (as the questioning reached me through the brain, the word may serve) cut deep into my soul. The scars are there to-day. Death was a good friend on that occasion, but the mental suffering was acute. Some call these pangs the bitterness of death.

When for the third time we met—Death and I—it was as old acquaintances, almost as friends. My path was straight ahead, and I walked on. Death half raised his hand to place it on my shoulder. I did not mind, but duty called me forward; so I warded him off as a man will ward off a friend, who would beckon him to rest when there is still

work to be done. We parted pleasantly. Death and I must come together once again. On that day our path will be the same.

When lying dangerously ill, I was often very tired and would gladly have fallen asleep, never to awake. But a divine irritation stirred within my heart that would not allow even the possibility of unending slumber. A strange inspiration quickened my failing limbs, so that now I believe there is still work to be done after these fleshly muscles have ceased all movement.

“And I look for the Resurrection of the dead, And the life of the world to come.” How it may be I cannot guess. I seem to be waiting in a dentist’s ante-room. Soon I shall be summoned. There will be a wrench, maybe a terrible wrench, or possibly no pain at all. Then the awful operation will be over. I shall know all.

Whence comes this inward conviction that death is not the end? In those quiet twilight

hours, the day's work over as I believed, and the body only waiting to be called to rest, I would search carefully for the motive-power of past actions. I could not remember having ever been deterred from a single sin by the fear of hell fire, or having ever been moved towards goodness by a longing for white robes and a harp of gold. I do not bring forward this fact as proof that the common Christian doctrine of a personal after-life is a futile one; but only that it does not appeal to my imagination. It leaves me untouched. You may regard it differently. Nothing I can say will move your faith a hair's breadth, if it be fixed firmly in you. Indeed, it may prove the true one. I do not deny it; but I have never been able to accept it.

From the window of your soul you have looked down the highway of life, across the pleasant spaces of the world, to the steep hills and to the ever restless sea. As your eyes have beheld, your heart has accepted. But how far

has your vision extended? I also have looked out of the window of my soul. I too have seen, or have thought I have seen, a little way. Yet how narrow the view! how feeble my sight!

Man is no better than a blind earthworm. Voices call him forward, but he never sees who calls. He gropes in the darkness, stumbling and falling. He taps the ground a few inches ahead of him with a stick, which he calls sometimes "Personal Experience," sometimes "Accepted Truth," sometimes "Rational Conclusions." So long as it gives forth a familiar ring he goes gaily on his way. But let him hear a new sound, or let there be none forthcoming, when the blow falls on new ground; and he starts back terrified. He is frightened to move. Are the scales never to fall from the eyes of humanity? Must man always cry out :

"O say, what is that thing called Light


Which I must ne'er enjoy?

What are the blessings of the Sight?

Oh! tell this poor blind boy."

I sit in the shadow of a great rock,
XXXV. and it is I who am weary. I have
sinned, but also I have tried to do
right. Let the record go forward. I trust in
the justice of my Judge.

What has been the purpose of these narrow
years; what has been the object of so much
barren toil? I think of all the tears that
have fallen for me, of the heartaches and
the unhappiness I have caused, and of the
misery of fellow-creatures seemingly necessary
that my affairs might prosper. I see the awful
massacre of animal victims, slaughtered that
this body might be fed and clothed. I perceive
gardens ravished of flower and fruit for my
pleasure. And the mortal end of it is agony,
unallayed agony, until the tortured breath
ceases, and this crude conglomeration of matter
be dissipated in the earth whence it came.
Looking at the past from this point of view,
I appear to be but a flibbertigibbet—carrion
robed in ~~tatters~~, dangling for brief time from



a dolorous gallows-tree above a waste of years, creaking and groaning in the night-wind, an object of pity, of shame or of horror, something to be avoided by every passer-by.


But as my life has been, so are the lives of thousands. Why do I: why do they live? This existence cannot be purposeless.

There runs a rhythm through creation, which according to the highest intelligence sanctions the theory of a Supreme Being. The most sceptical confess that the order, method and system of all things living, great and small, point to the existence of God. Man has not been sent into the world by chance, nor is his development due to fortuitous incidents. He is here for a purpose. What may that purpose be? How do we in our individual lives further it?

Man is an animal; in his birth and in his death, an animal; in many of the momentous acts, which give colour to future years, an animal. Ages have passed since he assumed

the erect attitude, but his frame has changed hardly at all. Man still pays the penalty for standing upright—the male man-beast less perhaps than the female man-beast. The broad belt of abdominal muscles was bestowed, so that the burden of the unborn child might be carried lightly. And it fulfilled its reason when the man-beast moved on all fours. Since the animal has chosen to stand erect, the race has had to pay for the privilege a heavy death-tax throughout the centuries. We may be certain of this—that man's purpose on earth has nothing to do with the perfection of the body. Already in this respect he is surpassed by the horse, the dog, the cat; by a dozen different species to the breeding of which he himself has given attention.

This train of thought makes it so difficult to accept belief in the immortality of the body, though I will not deny it. The mystery of the tomb can never be revealed in the shadowy light of this world. Nevertheless the human



body appears such an ill-constructed vessel, once the immortal essence be withdrawn, that I cannot comprehend why its outward shape should be continued through all eternity. We say man was made in the image of God ; are we sure we do not sketch God in the image of man ?

During the weakness of a serious
XXXVI. illness, the mind naturally goes back to the days of childhood. It is almost as if memory were searching for events which occurred even before birth. One dream I remember well, when I was very, very ill. I dreamed I was a child again playing in the garden at home. I had run about until I was tired ; I had trampled on the flower-beds after my toys ; I had picked flowers I had been forbidden to pick ; I had eaten fruit from the trees on the kitchen-garden wall, which I knew I ought not to touch. My feet were wet, for I had played in the puddles ; and my clean

clothes were dirty and torn, for I had climbed the trees. But I had had a happy day ; I had been naughty and had done many pleasant things I knew I ought not to have done.

Then I dreamed I heard my old nurse calling me to go in. I wondered whether she would be angry with me. She might perhaps tell my father, and I should be punished. But I remember that I argued: "No, she will not do that, for I have not been really so very naughty. She will probably scold me a little, saying 'Eh! child, whatever have you been up to!' She will make me at once take off my wet boots and my dirty clothes; she will put me to bed, and just before I fall asleep will come and kiss me and tuck me up, and make me promise to be a better boy."

The old days came back with lightning vividness. I was just entering the house, out of the sunlight, when I woke up. To my sorrow it was only a dream.

Out of the sunlight, into the house, the dark



house! Yes, one day I must go in. I have been naughty; I have been disobedient. I have picked flowers I should not have picked; I have eaten forbidden fruit. The white garment of my soul is soiled and torn. Shall I be punished? I deserve it. Is Nature a nurse who calls us in? Will she be angry with me? Boys will be boys!

Out of the sunlight, into the house, the dark house! Yes, we all must go in one day. But why should we dread it so much. How many of those we have loved have already passed into the dark house, out of the sunlight!

It was during this illness that a creature I despised dared to lecture me on my doubts. I do not mind rebuke from loving lips or an understanding heart, but to suffer the censure of a fool is to be whipped with thistles. He said that once on a time he himself had had doubts about a personal resurrection, but God had permitted the spirit of his favourite brother to appear to him. Gradually my sense of

humour asserted itself; and the angry feelings subsided. He drivelled on, honestly believing he was converting me, as he was pleased to call it. The night after the funeral, his brother's wraith had appeared to him and conversed with him. He assured me there was no doubting it; above the left eyebrow was the old scar; it was wearing his brother's favourite suit of grey clothes. And he added: "If it be possible for one man to return from the grave, then it must be possible for all to return, were it so willed."

I assented.

So he went on, reproaching me and begging me to be guided by what his eyes had seen. I lay quite quiet, collecting favourite garden-roller words, heavy rotund phrases, with which I have been wont to crush vermicular uppishness. At last the opportunity arrived.

"I regret," I said, "I cannot be guided by the evidence of your highly interesting ocular **demonstration**. The soul of your buried brother



rose from the dead, and appeared to you in the garb of mortal flesh and of mortal clothing. If one body can so appear from the grave, I admit that all bodies must be able to. And if one suit of clothes can be so reconstituted, to all clothes must be the same power. If, on your evidence, I accept the belief in a literal resurrection of the body; on the same evidence I must accept a belief in the glorious resurrection of every old pair of trousers. I cannot do that."

The immortality of the body is not to be proved or disproved by ocular demonstrations, or by other human arguments. It must remain a matter of faith, that is to say, a question purely of the imagination. And the answer will always depend on many earthly circumstances; for instance, on early training, on mature experiences, and on a person's individual share of joy and sorrow, of pleasure and pain. But whatever the answer, whether it be for or against it, it in no way lessens or increases the impenetrability of the actual truth.

Why should I desire to be burdened through eternity with the outward form of these scarred limbs and of this broken visage? The egoism, which inspires every healthy-minded man with an abiding sense that his body, in some way or another is superior to the bodies of all others, is a sound sentiment for this world; but it is not rational when applied to the next, where all generations are to be gathered together. The chemical composition of the human body is run in familiar moulds; the cells are built up on old patterns.

Many years ago I knew a good-looking young fellow who was eaten up with self-conceit. In a skit I wrote on him, he had died and had swaggered into the Elysian Fields as if the whole place belonged to him. Suddenly, he found himself in the company of his forefathers. Without a word of apology his paternal grandfather ripped off his moustaches, saying: "My boy, these are mine." One grandmother resumed, with a smile, his

blue eyes; and the other the elegant bend of his nose; and the wave of his hair on which he particularly prided himself, was re-appropriated by an elderly gentleman, who had lived three generations previously. Before he had been with his ancestors three minutes, there was nothing left to him which he could call his own, except the miserable ghost of a swagger.

Never waste time listening to the
XXXVII. dawdlers on the graded roads.

Go where the paths are steepest and the flints cut deeply; where men and women struggle every hour just to keep their foothold, or to make a little room so that for a short space their children may play in the sunlight, before the struggle begins again for them. Hear what earth's toilers have to say on the great problems of life and after-life.

The existence of a Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul are their two universal

beliefs. They generally regard God as not half a bad fellow with a bad temper. They often decline immortality for themselves, while accepting it for others.

An old Hindu peasant, illiterate but shrewd, was at one time a friend of mine. He had recently lost his favourite grandson, and I was condoling with him.

"When you die, what will happen to you?" I asked.


"I shall be buried over there," he said, pointing to a corner of his orchard.

"Is that all?"

"What more?" he answered, shrugging his shoulders. A smile played around his wrinkled eyes, apparently at the mere idea that there should be anything beyond the grave.

"And your grandson, what of him?"

The old man's face instantly changed. A look of reverence spread over his features, and in tones the sincerity of which there was no doubting, he said simply:



“God required the soul of my boy for the body of a king’s child. Therefore he died.”

Human love compels a lively belief in immortality. The converse is equally and happily true. Lively belief in immortality quickens human love. This is a fact all the world over.

Few people realize how small a part dogma, sect, or even creed plays in the lives of the multitudes. The principle underlying the belief of that Hindu peasant underlies the belief of thousands of Christian working-folk. The masses who have no leisure to theorize, but whose whole time on earth is fully occupied in a long fight for existence, whether in mine, factory, or vineyard, on the fickle sea, or in the reluctant field, accept one or two general truths, cloaked of course in different fashions, but the same in all essentials.

I have never felt any real doubt concerning the immortality of the soul. In the days of my youth, when the blood ran hot through my

veins and I seized pleasure as it came, and the days were all sunshine and roses, and the nights filled with love and with laughter, I snapped my fingers in the face of my Creator and shouted: "There is no God! There is no heaven! There is no hell!"

The present was golden; I held it. The future was a myth; it was so distant. God laughs with youth: He knows the years will bring sorrow and wisdom. I quickly recovered from that midsummer madness, and I have never since questioned the verity of immortality. During illness my belief always has been strengthened. The soul of man lives for ever.

How define the term "soul"? Mind, intelligence, intellect, will, thought—everything beyond actual animal instincts—is comprehended in the word as I understand it. You may talk of psychic force and of mental force, as though they were things apart. I do not grasp the difference. The soul implies the whole of that motive power which divides

man from the beasts to which structurally he is most closely allied.

I state no new thing; I re-write old formulas; I strive to re-echo eternal verities. The shadows lengthen, and I cannot find it in my heart to own that my little day has been of no account. According to the Bible reckoning, the world has lasted six thousand years. Take but one thousand of those years; bulk the lives of all human beings that drew breath during that period of time, and set your own mortal existence beside that stupendous mass. It is the veriest speck; but you cannot have it regarded as valueless. Will your soul look larger on the marge of eternity?

The immortality of the soul and the earthly happiness of the body are insolubly welded together. Accept the one, and you strive for the other; work for the latter, and you are unable to deny the former.

There is in man a quality, which compels him to rank himself above the beasts that

perish. It is infinitely older than Christianity. Even the most depraved tribes have always believed themselves to be the especial care of supernatural powers, or the especial object of their hatred. They have moulded their lives to please these deities or devils. Underlying the most brutal and apparently senseless rites one always finds the same reason—the future well-being of the race.

The progress of some races has been more rapid than others. In the sight of their Creator, or beneath the knife of the anatomist, the pure-blooded Redskin and the Pale-face mongrel of Manhattan Bay are one and the same being. But contrast the wigwams of the West with the palaces of Fifth Avenue! It is hardly credible that they should be the habitat of specimens of an identical species dwelling on the same continent. Though the body does not change, the mind, or—to use the larger word—the soul develops quickly under favourable conditions.

When one is ill and weak, a friend comes and sits in the room, saying nothing. You do not even see him, yet you feel his presence. The mind is calmed and soothed. What is this communication? What constitute these passage-ways between mind and mind, between soul and soul? The same experience is common to brother and sister, to man and wife, to friend and friend; so it cannot be sexual influence or physical fascination. It is a mental effluence as real and living as the touch of hand and hand.

Here is a great mystery, one which may lead us some day to a clearer understanding of that supernatural existence, which has set the man-beast above all other beasts of the field.

I believe that man has the power of transmitting his Self to the atmosphere. I believe that man through that inner energy, commonly known as the soul, sets in motion, promotes or checks certain pulsations or vibrations of

the air, certain atmospheric waves which exert direct power over the minds and souls of his fellow-beings, not only of those around him, but of future generations. Atmospheric influences affect the mental state of all animals; alone of all animals man through his mental state influences the atmosphere. He is able to create an atmospheric condition, favourable for the development of the soul (I adhere to the larger term). These wave-currents gather or lose force according to the lives of each generation. Actions are the expression of the soul, as words are the expression of the brain—the lesser soul. The man, who lives for the mere animal side of existence, checks the force of the soul-waves by which human development is carried forward; whereas the man, who lives for his fellow-men, who has found pleasure in the promotion of the happiness of his race, intensifies their power.

The waves that break on Cornwall's coasts have been set in motion by forces hundreds

of miles distant; the waves that to-day beat upon the minds of living men were started centuries ago. In the birth-hour of this twentieth century, a birth-hour terribly dark for England, we beheld a silent, stubborn courage overtake the nation. Whence came it? Certainly not from living influences, not from the flaccid, fatted years of prosperity that immediately preceded the war. I believe that the national mind, attuned by national suffering, became responsive to those vibrations promoted a century ago by the strong endurance of the people. These vibrations even then were not new. When victory returned to the flag, and the days of triumph arrived, instantly the popular mind became again responsive to the grosser influences of later years. And the nation mafficked.

“Evening grey, morning red,
Sends the shepherd wet to bed.
Evening red, morning grey,
Is the sure sign of a very fine day.”

This doggerel, always at the tip of the tongue of old shepherds, constantly recurs to me. When a boy I never doubted its truth, for it almost always proved true. Yet the shepherd knew nothing about the dryness or humidity of the atmosphere, which governs these simple phenomena. The Chinaman, when a man becomes distinguished, honours his ancestors. We laugh at the idea. May not the Mongolian be as right as the shepherd? What you are to-day, that your children to the third and fourth generation shall become, not only in their body but in their soul, not only through their mother's womb but through God's pure ether, to which you and I and all of us are transmitting the motive-power which is to-day controlling and propelling our own actions.

Many people believe most sincerely in the efficacy of prayer, and cite instances. May it not be that this efficacy is due to this very effluence; that prayer is the concentration of

a certain number of persons towards the attainment of a certain object, whereby they set in motion certain waves of thought which propel other minds? Effluence, I believe, is to a large extent local in character. I am not at all sure that its effect may not extend to the more familiar actions of atmosphere. Queen's weather, which became proverbial in this country during the last years of Queen Victoria's reign, may possibly have been due to this cause. I know the theory lends itself readily to ridicule; but when the nineteenth century was in its cradle, how ludicrous would have sounded the suggestion that a man's animation might be suspended while a limb was lopped off from his body without his knowledge. A generation ago the cheeks of the groundlings would have cracked at the bare suggestion of photographing a living man's skeleton through clothes and flesh. Before this century dies, science may be able to give as invaluable assistance in the cure of souls

as it renders to-day in the cure of bodies. It may count the pulse-beats of virtue, and measure with instruments the rise and fall of vice.

According to this theory of effluence, the human mind does actually communicate to the atmosphere certain vibrations, which never wholly cease and which exert physical influence over other human minds through an indefinite period of time. This effluence which cannot die is the soul of man that lives for ever. Hence come the thought, the prayer, the aspiration.

I am as other men are. I have
XXXVIII. read a little; I have travelled a
little. I have toiled on several continents, I have worked amid different civilizations, I have dwelt in the solitude of the forest and among the busy ways of crowded cities. I have enjoyed life intensely; yet I have suffered torrid heat and Arctic cold, and I have

endured constant toil, frequent pain and no small misery, mental and bodily. I have heard the noise of warring multitudes, and have listened to the silence of the great seas. I have rested in the voiceless desert, and have wandered through forsaken market-place, ruined palace and empty temple. I have watched new towns spring up in the wilds, and have seen gardens blossom in the wilderness. Among my higher pleasures has always been a good luncheon or dinner, the dishes skilfully selected, the wines carefully chosen, all delicately served, and followed by cigar and coffee, which bring with them the true aroma of the lands where it is always afternoon. I know the effect of climate. I understand the pressure of environment. I have felt to the full the power of hereditary instincts, good and bad. But I have ever been conscious of some greater power over, above, and beyond all these things. It has varied according to place. Its influence has been gentle but persistent.

It has fallen lightly like the hammer of the Oriental coppersmith, whose blows are so soft that it seems impossible he can mould the metal to his will; but gradually, almost miraculously, the plate assumes the form desired. So has it been with my soul beneath the gentle hammer-blows of these soul-waves.

Deny God: deny the immortality of the soul; and man denies the two essential elements of human progress, the two great truths for which the master-minds of humanity have struggled since the earliest dawn. Listen to the cry! "God is God. Man is immortal." It ascends from grove and grotto, from temple and church, from every altar—ay! even from altars raised to the unknown God or to a half-suspected devil.

Listen to the cry! "God is God. Man is immortal." It falters and quavers where silken ease and velvet luxury abound, and all the fatted things of life are plentiful; but let there be anguish of heart, let the animal-body of man

be starved and scourged, tortured horribly and brutally abused, and it swells to a triumphant battle-cry: "God is God! Man is immortal!"

Man occupies his place on the surface of the planet Earth, not as an animal, but as an immortal. The spirit that moves his creature nature to action continues through unmeasured time.

We point the finger of scorn—and rightly—at men and women content to find happiness in animal pleasures; even though they may have fulfilled their immediate duty and have propagated their species and have trained their offspring rightly. This sentiment is unintelligible, if man has no higher object to serve than towards himself and his generation. For these people do no harm except to themselves and to immediate creatures like unto themselves. The old jesting question "What has posterity done for me?" must thus be answered: "Posterity has compelled me to lead a clean, honourable and unselfish life to my last hour."

If there be foul living and selfish indulgence, the air is poisoned; we suffer through the reflex action of posterity. If the reverse, the air is vivified and posterity ascends a few yards nearer heaven.


We say sometimes that every action of our lives is written down in God's Book. I believe it to be a literally true saying. Every action, or rather the motive-power of every action, is inscribed in undying characters on that scroll which encompasses the round world, and to which we give the name of atmosphere.

We are taught to believe that
XXXIX. judgment on all mortal men and
women is to be pronounced on a
Day to which there must be one to-morrow—
an eternal morrow on which no night shall fall
if the sentence be in our favour, but whose
darkness no sun's dawn shall lighten should
the doom be everlasting punishment.

Will there then be a Day of Judgment—a

Last Day and One Day After? I say nothing. I shall know the whole truth soon enough. It may even be that we are only sent into this world to form a medium culture for some infinitely higher form of life. At this moment a germ may be lurking in our brain or heart—a microbe that under the microscope appears a thing of dots, dashes and interrogation marks—from which in fulness of time a newer and a nobler being shall be developed. It does not signify. The problem of life before birth no longer perplexes me. If there be such an existence, it throws no light on the path we must tread during the present term of our mortality.

I am convinced that our purpose on earth is to render the world a little happier, a little brighter and a little healthier for those who come after us. Thus do we benefit the race; and thus the soul continues to increase in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man.



In as far as my actions have tended towards this object, I regard them with peace and content; but oh! the unutterable humiliation in black moments of despair on a bed of sickness when hours are recalled, never to be re-lived, in which only the animal had been considered. Those memories burn; they are hell-fire!

It is right to preach vigorously the immortality of the body, for in this way alone shall the multitudes lead mortal lives worthy of the soul that lives for ever.

How can you convey to the errand-boy and your washerwoman the knowledge that every act of theirs exerts an actual influence on posterity, except by explaining that their present existence continues in some mystical manner after death? Whether the future state of humanity in this world be a happy or unhappy one depends to a definite degree, infinitesimal but appreciable, upon the acts in life of each one of us, no matter our social

condition. It is vital to human progress that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul shall be willingly received and shall exercise an active inspiration throughout the earthly existence of each one of us; therefore it is our duty to preach this immortality in the most effective manner possible.

The soul is immortal. Will not that certain knowledge suffice for man? It has brought comfort to me in moments when I believed that I was dying. This mortal body *may* be raised up. In my strength I cannot be persuaded though one rose from the dead. When the death-sweat gathers on my brow I cannot change my faith. There is nothing to fear. God is in heaven. I will step boldly into the night.

XL. And when at last this mortal life is
 over, I would have them place a
 Gloire de Dijon in my hands, and
if there be enough of these roses in the

garden, let them make a cross of them and lay it on the coffin. I want no other flowers. Let a granite cross be set above my head, and on it engrave St. Paul's exhortation to Timothy: "Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life."

The only horror death has for me comes from the thought of the sorrow that my going may leave behind. Yet I want all who love me to grieve for me; I should like them to be sorry even because the tyranny of my last illness is over. I wish for tears to fall on my account; and that they shall feel that some little fragment has been broken from their lives, which can never be mended.

But let them do nothing to bind themselves to sorrow, once the sting has gone out of it. Let the grief for me be natural, and being natural it shall pass away; and when the turf has become smooth and green again, and grows round the cross above my head as though it were a native oak springing from hidden seed,

they may come and stand beside my grave cheerfully; and their thoughts shall then be not of death-rooms and dirges, but of those trivial jests and careless jokes which may perhaps cling to my name.

I want no flower-bed above my grave; only a Gloire de Dijon rose planted near by, for it is very hardy. The tree needs little care, and I believe no pruning; and it blossoms freely. I know it begins to flower in the earliest spring and I have picked buds from it out in the open on dark days in November, and once even on Christmas morning. So there should be no trouble for any one; and nearly always, all the year round, above my last earthly resting-place a homely sweet-smelling rose waiting to be picked. Pick it and remember me as I would be remembered—forgetting the dead wood forgiving the thorns, and glad of the passing fragrance of the flower when your heart is sad.

When I am dead, let me live happily in the memory, for I have tried to bring

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the passing fragrance of happiness into the lives of all with whom I have been thrown into contact, knowing well how great is the sadness that lies hidden in the heart of the world.

FINIS.

JAN 18 1912



